

A CENTURY OF ANGELICAN THEOLOGY

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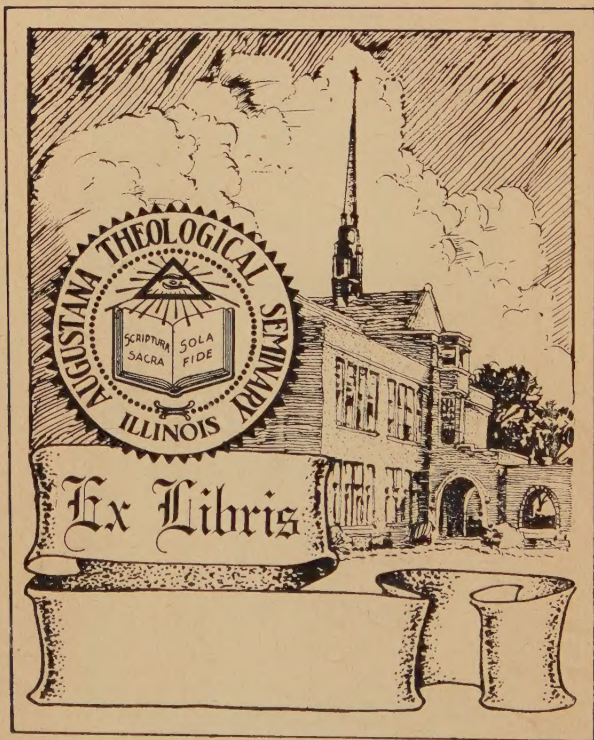
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**A CENTURY OF
ANGLICAN THEOLOGY**

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A CENTURY OF ANGLICAN THEOLOGY AND OTHER LECTURES

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A CENTURY OF ANGLICAN THEOLOGY

I

A CENTURY OF ANGLICAN THEOLOGY¹

1

'**T** *IS Sixty Years Since* is the second title of Scott's first novel which gave its name to the famous series which it inaugurated, and the fact encourages us to think that the lapse of sixty years may suffice to invest events with the halo of romance. The same interval as separated the publication of *Waverly* from the Jacobite rising of 1745 separates us to-day from the appearance of *Essays and Reviews*, an event doubtless less rich than the adventure of Prince Charlie in romantic possibilities, but one of no little moment in the history of Anglican theology; and one which marked rather the early and tentative stage of a movement whose importance has been growing from that day to this than (like the

¹ Delivered as lectures to Clergy of the Diocese of Oxford, 1921.

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failure of the young Chevalier to make any considerable impression on the people whose rightful sovereign he claimed to be) the last conspicuous sign of life in a movement doomed, after calling forth a wonderful response of devotion and self-sacrifice, to disappear in the course of a century altogether from the world, remaining only in memory "to point a moral and adorn a tale."

Perhaps the most interesting of all the *Essays and Reviews*, in the famous volume so called, to a reader sixty years afterwards is that on *The Tendencies of Religious Thought in England from 1688 to 1730* by the famous scholar Mark Pattison, afterwards Rector of Lincoln College in this University. I am not now, however, concerned with the actual contents of the essay so much as with the spirit of dispassionate historical inquiry which Pattison intended to illustrate by his treatment of his chosen subject. He was conscious that this spirit was one which would excite surprise and in some quarters disapproval when exhibited by an ecclesiastical historian. "We have not yet learnt," he says, "in this country, to write our ecclesiastical history on any better footing than that of praising up the party, in or out of the Church, to which we happen to belong.

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Still further," he continues, "are we from any attempt to apply the laws of thought and of the succession of opinion to the course of English theology." The reception of the essay did not disappoint his expectation in this regard. "This attempt to present the English public with a philosophical monograph on one special phase of religious thought was," he tells us in his *Memoirs*, "singularly unsuccessful. To judge from the reviews it never occurred to any of our public instructors that such a conception was possible. Clerical or Anti-clerical, from the *Westminster Review* to the *Guardian*, they were all busily occupied in finding or making contradictions between the writer's words and the thirty-nine articles." "The English public could not recognize such a thing as a neutral and philosophical enquiry into the causes of the form of thought existing at any period. Our clergy know only of pamphlets which must be either for or against one of the parties in the Church." He mentions, however, two eminent men, neither of them, it is true, an Anglican, who had a juster conception of his purpose. One was the distinguished Lutheran divine, Dorner, the author of the well-known *History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ*. He, says Pattison, "accepted the essay for

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what it was intended to be, a history and not a manifesto, in his history of Protestant theology and made much use and ample acknowledgment of it." "Another exception," I quote the *Memoirs* again, "to the chorus of blatant and ignorant howling with which my poor writing was received, I will record. Soon after the publication of *Essays and Reviews*, happening to come down from Town in the train with Father—since Cardinal—Newman, whom I had not seen for a long time, I was in terror as to how he would regard me in consequence of what I had written. My fears were quickly relieved. He blamed severely the throwing of such speculations broadcast upon the general public. It was, he said, unsettling their faith without giving them anything else to rest upon. But he had no word of censure for the latitude of theological speculation assumed by the essay, provided it had been addressed *ad clerum*, or put out, not as a public appeal, but as a scholastic dissertation addressed to learned theologians. He assured me that this could be done in the Roman communion and that much greater latitude of speculation on theological topics was allowed in this form in the Catholic Church than in Protestant communities."

Pattisón was never a sympathetic critic of his

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neighbours; of those among them who were out of tune with himself and his aims he was apt to take a jaundiced view. But those of us who were bred in clerical households, the heads of which were his contemporaries, can recognize in his strictures a considerable measure of truth. They will recall how even large-minded clergymen of the Church of England would still be apt to speak in tones of apology when commending a Nonconformist, and would regard it as something exciting and venturesome to be engaged in co-operation about some matter of public morals with a Roman Catholic priest or a Presbyterian minister. If here in Oxford, at any rate to-day, the frame of mind thus evinced seems to us something remote and unfamiliar, it is to a great degree due to the special advantage which, during the last quarter of a century, we have enjoyed through the intellectual and religious intercourse between men of divers communions which the establishment among us of Mansfield and Manchester Colleges and of the hostels of the Roman Catholic Religious Orders has brought about. I do not suppose, however, that it is a frame of mind so utterly extinct everywhere, but that an attempt such as I am making in these lectures to connect events in the history of modern Anglican

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theology with the great movements of thought which affect the whole of our civilization may have to some of my hearers some of the interest of novelty and contrast; though I shall in no way claim to have done more than touch very lightly the surface of a subject which would repay a much more thorough examination than I can pretend to have made of it. I shall for my part be quite content if what I say be found suggestive of further thought and inquiry.

We may, I think, begin our study of Anglican theology during the last hundred years by noting two characteristics of Anglican theology as a whole, which have belonged to it during the greater part of the history of the English Church since its separation from the Roman obedience: its isolation and its Platonism. I will first say something about its isolation. This was in the main due to the *via media*, the middle course, which the English Church took at the Reformation, between the course followed by that part of Western Christendom which adhered to the Roman See and the more innovating course followed by the majority of those who rebelled against its authority. But it was intensified after the Civil War. This struggle had put an enmity between the Anglicanism which triumphed at the Restoration of

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Charles II and the Puritanism over which it triumphed.

The attention of Anglicans, particularly after the Revolution of 1688, came to be concentrated upon controversies purely national, respecting the claims of rival dynasties to the allegiance of Churchmen. The Universities of Oxford and Cambridge were closed to all but signatories of the Thirty-nine Articles, and lost altogether the international character which had belonged to them in the Middle Ages and had not quite disappeared in the interval between the Reformation and the Restoration. Though the bulk of the English clergy and laity unquestionably continued to regard themselves as on the Protestant side in the great controversy of Western Christendom, the fact that it was the Puritans who had been ejected, rather than the Conformists who remained within the national Church, that were nearest in their forms of worship and piety to the Protestants of the Continent, probably tended on the whole to emphasize the distinction between these latter and the Anglicans. When, in the nineteenth century, the Tractarian movement spread far and wide among both the clergy and laity, a new consciousness of unity in the tradition of Catholic order with the Church

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of this country before the Reformation and also with the communions which, whether in east or west, had preserved the apostolical succession of the ministry and in consequence (according to the Tractarian view) a genuinely valid Eucharist, this new consciousness, while not in reality bringing the Church of England much closer to the Roman Church, which could not be persuaded to acknowledge the validity of Anglican orders or the Anglican Eucharist and would hear of nothing but submission to the authority of the Pope, undoubtedly removed that large section of the Church which adopted to a greater or less extent the Tractarian opinions further then ever from the Protestant Churches at home or abroad, which repudiated the necessity, whether to the commission of their ministers or to the reality of the grace conveyed in their ordinances, of a connexion through a continuous episcopal succession with the ministry of the ancient undivided Church. Thus in fact the Tractarian movement, while widening in certain ways the outlook of Anglican theology, in some important respects even increased the isolation which, owing to its history, had long been characteristic of it. It is, I think, to a considerable extent, still characteristic of it: but there are now certain influences adverse

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to this isolation acting upon it. After the Civil War, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, at that time the only schools of higher learning in England, were closed to all but signatories of the Thirty-nine Articles. This was at once a sign and a part cause of the isolation of Anglican theology during the succeeding period. The opening of the ancient Universities in the nineteenth century to the whole nation irrespective of religious belief, and the establishment of new Universities in which the limitation of membership to Anglicans was from the first unknown, has been a potent influence in diminishing that isolation. Even when I was an under-graduate in Oxford, between thirty and forty years ago, though the old tests had been for some years abolished, yet this abolition had by no means taken complete effect. The number of Nonconformist students was still small; while Cardinal Manning lived, the residence of Roman Catholics in the University was discouraged and consequently rare. Even when I began to lecture, the great majority of one's audience might be assumed, at any rate in many colleges, to be English born, and bred in the Church of England. But now Oxford (and no doubt Cambridge also) is almost as cosmopolitan as in the Middle Ages, and the na-

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tions which are represented in our lecture rooms are far more numerous and represent the inhabitants of a far larger part of the earth's surface than in the Middle Ages. It is nothing uncommon for a lecturer to have a Buddhist or a Hindoo or a Moslem among his audience, not to speak of members of almost any of the great communions into which Christendom is divided. And not only may the Anglican student of theology thus be brought into association as an individual with men belonging to other Churches and creeds and trained in different traditions, but in the great theological colleges of Mansfield and Manchester and in the hostels of the Roman Catholic Religious Orders, the Anglican teachers of theology have colleagues who are not Anglican co-operating with them, and that for the most part in an entirely cordial and sympathetic fashion. The Faculty of Theology itself is now a faculty not only of Anglican theology, but of Christian theology in the widest sense, opening its degrees to all who are qualified by their competent knowledge of Christian theology to receive them: and in the Society of Historical Theology the seniors—in such societies as the Nicene, the Origen, and I dare say several others, the juniors—of the Anglican community discuss theologi-

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cal questions freely and frankly with men who are not of their communion, but are also in many cases candidates for the ministry of some Christian Church, and are, at any rate, earnestly interested in the search for religious truth. I have spoken of Oxford, which I know; but at Cambridge, in the other great school of Anglican theology, there are of course analogous conditions, tending to a similar breaking down of the isolation characteristic of that theology; not to mention the newer Universities, two at least of which, London and Manchester, possess active Faculties of Theology in which Anglican theologians co-operate with those of other religious bodies in the service of sacred learning and thought.

I have said enough for the present of the first of the two notes which I mentioned as characteristic of Anglican theology as a whole—its isolation. I pass on to the other—its Platonism.

Not long ago a very intelligent young divine from the Swiss University of Geneva came with an introduction to visit me. He was passing through Oxford in the course of his travels and was anxious to form a just impression of the existing condition of English theology, its characteristics, and its tendencies. In conversation with me upon this subject, he

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observed that it seemed to him that in the utterances of Anglican theologians (and I think he had most prominently in his mind an address he had heard from the present Bishop of Manchester, Dr. William Temple) there was manifest in a marked degree the influence of the philosophy of Plato; and he made the remark, which seemed to me both just and acute, that to this was probably due to a considerable degree the fact which had struck him that English divines (and I do not think he meant here Anglican divines only, but it would be especially true of them) found what he called Nicene language, the language of the Catholic Creeds, more congenial, and used it more familiarly and readily, than was the case with the theologians of the Protestant Churches abroad. As I talked with him, it seemed to me that my Swiss visitor had here hit upon a really important truth about the theology of the Church of England; and I recalled how faithful Anglicanism has been throughout its history to that Platonic philosophy which has been called the "old loving nurse" of Christian theology, and under the guidance of which the terminology was formed wherein the ancient Fathers and Councils of the Christian Church endeavoured to give an intellectual account of their religious experience. I remem-

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bered the great school of the Cambridge Platonists in the seventeenth century who rose above the fierce controversies of the time into a clearer atmosphere of rational piety. I remembered how, in the eighteenth century, when Priestley, the celebrated chemist and the pioneer student (though ill-equipped by his scholarship for the task) of the study of the history of dogma, put forward his Unitarianism as a doctrine free from the difficulties of the orthodox confession of the Trinity in Unity, the reply of his Anglican critic, Bishop Horsley, was: "I beseech you, read the *Parmenides*"—that dialogue in which Plato shows us how difficult it is, when one thinks it out, to conceive of *unity*: how full this conception, with which we certainly cannot dispense, and which is treated sometimes, as by Priestley, as though it were simple and intelligible, is of paradoxes and puzzles. I recalled how the study of Plato's *Republic* in this University, which was to be so characteristic of Oxford philosophical teaching during the last seventy years, is said to have received a new impulse from the lectures upon it of Sewell, the founder of Radley College, who was attracted by the analogy of the Ideal State depicted by Plato with the ideal of the Christian Church as it presented itself to the

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imagination of the men of the Tractarian movement. I thought again how deeply dyed in Platonism was the thought of such men as the poet Coleridge, Frederick Denison Maurice, and Bishop Westcott, who did so much to mould the thought of those Anglicans who stood more or less apart from the Tractarian movement, while at the same time their teaching has been a hardly less powerful leaven (as I remember Bishop Gore pointing out to me years ago) in the later developments of the school—call it Anglo-Catholic or what you will—which looks back to the Oxford movement as its parent, than the teaching of the Tractarians themselves. I reflected lastly how, if one were to ask oneself who were the ablest Anglican theologians of to-day, no names would come more readily to mind than those of the present Bishop of Manchester and the present Dean of St. Paul's, both men who would be the first to confess that they were Platonists and that for them Plato—or, in Dr. Inge's case, a disciple of Plato, Plotinus—stood beside the New Testament itself as the inspiration of their thinking on the things of God and of the soul. Certainly my Swiss friend was right. Platonism is a characteristic of Anglican theology, and to the constant influence of Platonism upon it has largely been

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due its greater faithfulness to the Catholic tradition of theology as compared with the Lutheran and Reformed Churches of the continent of Europe. It would perhaps even be true to say that its isolation, the other note of it to which I have called your attention, was itself not altogether independent of its Platonism; for this reason, that it tended to render it less sympathetic on the one hand with the Aristotelianism which has dominated the scholastic tradition canonized in the schools of the Roman Catholic Church, and on the other with certain tendencies which deeply affected the general trend of Protestant theology—with the tendency in earlier days to a certain hostility to reason and philosophy as dangerous rivals of grace and revelation—and in modern times with the doubts (associated with the name of Kant) as to the possibility of a genuine *knowledge* of God, of a “rational theology.”

The Ritschlian school which has been so prominent in German theology and in Protestant theology generally during the last half century has carried on this latter tradition. Ritschl, the founder of the school, will not allow theology to have anything to do with metaphysics. Professor Herrmann, of Marburg (whose work on *Communion of the Christian*

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with God has been translated into English, and is deservedly esteemed by many), will not admit that there is anything really in common between the revelation of God in the historical Christ which the Christian enjoys and any revelation, if such there be, which is or has been made outside the Christian covenant. From all such extravagances, which tend to cut the Christian religion adrift both from natural religion and from the historical process in which the Law was ordained to lead the Jew and Philosophy the Greek to the school of Christ, Anglican theology has been preserved by its Platonism. A result of the isolation of Anglican theology, to which, as I said, this Platonism has itself ministered, has been that the great movements of European thought, while they have undoubtedly affected Anglican theology and been echoed in its history—it could not be so isolated as not to be affected by them and to respond to them—have nevertheless been to a great extent unconsciously echoed here. It is the purpose of the following papers to show in more detail how this has, in certain conspicuous instances, been the course of events.

2

These papers are specially concerned with the last hundred years: but in dealing with the thought

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of any period, it is always necessary to cast one's eye upon that of the preceding period also; and I will accordingly ask your attention to a few remarks about some general tendencies of European thought during the age embracing the later eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries, the age which was signalized by the Declaration of American Independence, the French Revolution, and the career of the great Napoleon.

An English scholar of the seventeenth century, William Cave, writing a History of Ecclesiastical Literature, gave to the successive ages with which he was called upon to deal, names indicative of what is most memorable in each: thus he calls the first century of our era the *Saeculum Apostolicum*, the fourth the *Saeculum Arianum*, the thirteenth the *Saeculum Scholasticum*, the sixteenth (the last with which he deals) the *Saeculum Reformatum*, and so with the rest. An author whom I quoted in my last lecture, Mark Pattison, has suggested that on the same principle the eighteenth century might well be called the *Saeculum Rationalisticum*. My first task will be to call your attention to the tendency to what is called Rationalism, here noted as characteristic of that century, as a preface to an account of a reaction against

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it which, felt all over Europe in one shape or another, is represented in Anglican theology by the Evangelical movement, a movement which at the date from which my survey is supposed to start—a hundred years ago—had indeed to some extent spent its first force, but was still probably the most vital spiritual power in the religious life of the Church of England.

In every age in which the passion for knowledge is alive, we may expect to find some one science or group of sciences dominant, by which the best intellect of the time is attracted and by which the view of the world taken by cultivated men is coloured. The dominant intellectual interest of the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries may, I think, be said to have been the interest of mathematical science. This was the age of Galileo, of Descartes, of Pascal, of Newton, of Leibnitz, all of them men of great mathematical genius. Now it was natural that this dominant intellectual interest of the time should show itself in a widespread passion for that clearness and distinction which belong especially to mathematical ideas; and in a tendency to leave out of account whatever in experience may seem to be incapable of being set out in the clear, consecutive and convincing form

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which is proper to mathematical proof. Accordingly we find the chief philosophers of the period, from Bacon to Leibnitz, dreaming of a presentation of moral and metaphysical truth after a mathematical fashion which, by the use of precise definitions and the observation of such an ordered system of thinking as we find in Euclid, should lead to ethical and metaphysical conclusions as certain and as capable of winning universal assent as the conclusions of arithmetic and geometry. Those elements of reality, and especially those elements of human life, which do not readily emerge into the full light of consciousness, are in such a period in danger of being neglected. The State, for example, is thought of as deliberately *made* by a social contract, rather than, after a fashion more familiar to us, as like an organism "*growing* secretly." It is attempted to make religion reasonable by the omission or, at least, relegation to the background of what is paradoxical and remote from ordinary ways of thinking—such as, for example, the doctrines of the Trinity in the Godhead, or of salvation by the blood of Christ's atoning sacrifice. Morality is, indeed, brought into prominence relatively to religion because, in contrast with the mystery of religious dogmas and their failure to

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win acknowledgment outside a restricted circle, the intuitions of conscience are comparatively clear, and the main principles of distinction between right and wrong are generally accepted. There is everywhere a tendency to attend to what is done openly in the full light of consciousness, and a corresponding tendency to disregard in comparison with this those dark roots of experience in the subconscious and unconscious regions of spiritual life, which we are in our days rather in danger of over-emphasizing than of forgetting.

It must not, of course, be overlooked that during all the period, throughout which a certain neglect of these dark roots of spiritual experience was dominant, there were witnesses to the importance of the consideration of them. At the very beginning of it, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, there were great mystics with a profound sense of these: the greatest names among them are those of a Roman Catholic, the Spanish Carmelite, St. John of the Cross, and a Lutheran, the Silesian shoemaker, Jakob Boehme. A century after the latter's death, a great Anglican, William Law, the author of what is, perhaps, among devotional books written by members of the Church of England, the one which can

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most plausibly be described as a work of genius, I mean *The Serious Call*, a saint and a thinker and one of the best prose writers of his day, introduced into this country the doctrines of Boehme, or, as he was generally called in England, Behmen. Somewhat later, a very different man, also a great Anglican, Joseph Butler, Bishop of Durham, insisted in his famous *Analogy* on the point that what is generally called Deism—the belief, widely held in his day, that a thoughtful survey of Nature might lead to a belief in a wise and good God, unembarrassed by the difficulties which beset the doctrines of historical Christianity—would after all not fulfill its promises just because it ignored the difficulties—for example, the waste of life involved in the course of what men had not then learnt to call the “struggle for existence”—which would perplex any thorough-going seeker for God in the facts of nature, no less than the mysteries of revelation perplexed the enquirer into the doctrines of Christianity. Even among the great mathematical thinkers themselves there were not lacking signs of protests against the rationalism which concentration on mathematical and physical studies had fostered. Thus we have Pascal’s saying that the heart has its reasons which the reason does not

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know. And if rationalism, fostered by mathematical and physical studies, led, as it doubtless did, to neglect of the region of spiritual life which lies below the threshold of consciousness, one of the greatest mathematicians and philosophers of the age, Leibnitz, was led by his interest as a mathematician in the thought of continuity to insist upon the existence of such a subconscious region, continuous with our conscious life; and so to point the way in which, in latter days, so many psychologists have followed him in the exploration of this obscure background from which our conscious life seems to emerge, as the islands in the sea are in truth peaks of submarine mountain ranges overtopping the level below which the greater part of the chain is permanently sunk.

There were, however, more or less isolated exceptions to the general rule that, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it was what was clear and distinct and orderly and able to give a good account of itself before the tribunal of good sense and calm judgment that appealed to the general temper of the time. What is mysterious, strange, weird, inexpressible in language, has little attraction for those imbued with the rationalistic temper; at the best it might amuse an idle hour. "Enthusiasm" is with

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them a term of reproach, suggesting only extravagance and a want of self-control. But no one familiar with the history of ideas will be surprised to find that as the *Saeculum Rationalisticum* (to use Pattison's name for the period) went on, there began to reveal itself, side by side with this exclusive delight in what can be clearly and distinctly conceived, with this tendency to limit the sphere of Reason to what, being highly abstract, most easily permits itself to be thus clearly and distinctly conceived (for example, the quantities and magnitudes studied by mathematicians)—with this comparative neglect of the obscure and the subconscious as being irrational rather than as being provocative of more hardy attempts of Reason to master the less amenable material which they offered to its consideration—an exactly opposite tendency. This was a tendency to insist on the supreme value of feeling or sentiment, and brought about at last a real danger that all care for what is rational or sensible should be submerged by a flood of emotion. This tendency manifested itself first in a succession of religious movements with a strongly-marked emotional side—in the Protestant world in Pietism, Moravianism, Methodism, and in the Roman Catholic Church in the rise of the devo-

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tion of the Sacred Heart, originating in the visions of a French nun of the late seventeenth century, the Blessed Marie-Marguerite Alacoque, the imagery connected with which devotion reminds us so closely of that to be found in the hymns produced by the more or less contemporary movements in the Protestant Churches.

At last this tendency, which I may call for short "sentimental," without implying by that word any criticism of it, but only that it lays its principal stress upon *feeling* as contrasted with *reason*—this "sentimental" tendency revealed itself as a great intellectual force in Jean Jacques Rousseau. There is to be found in Lord Morley's book upon Rousseau a very interesting account of his far-reaching influence upon every department of the spiritual life of Europe. I will here confine myself to the theological aspects of this influence, before coming to exhibit the Evangelical movement in the Church of England as the Anglican representative of the tendency for which Rousseau stands in the general history of European thought. And I will also add to what I have to say about Rousseau himself something about certain developments of his principles which we may associate respectively with the French Revolution, for which

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Rousseau did so much to pave the way; with the moral philosophy of Kant, upon which Rousseau exercised, as Kant tells us, in a certain way a decisive influence; and with the work of the poet Goethe in the next generation. To both these developments something corresponding may be observed in the Evangelicalism which in Anglican theology reflects the whole movement whereof Rousseau is in general literature the central figure.

The contrast between the civilized state and a state of nature which might be supposed to lie behind it was a very old one; but it had not always been understood in the same way. The English philosopher Hobbes in the seventeenth century had described the state of nature as "poor, nasty, solitary, brutish, short"; in other words, as a mere animal existence. Rousseau and his followers were, on the other hand, disposed to regard it as better than civilization had come to be. Hence the new movement ran counter to the preference which, in the preceding age, the Age of Rationalism, as I called it, men generally felt for what is cultivated and civilised over what is undomesticated and wild; and we may note that this might seem to bring it into line with the theological tradition which had regarded the history of civilisa-

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tion as beginning in a fall from innocence, and had refused to allow that human nature could expect to attain perfection by making the best of its own resources, and asserted its absolute need of a supply from without of supernatural grace. This tradition, although out of sympathy with the prevailing tone of the age of Rationalism with its confidence in Reason, its satisfaction with the gifts of civilization, was by no means dead. It had indeed during that period been especially emphasized by the Calvinists in the Protestant Churches and by the Jansenists in the Roman Catholic Church in opposition to what seemed to them the acquiescence of Arminians and of Jesuits in the prevailing tendency to exalt unduly the native powers of humanity and the value of what was achieved by these alone. But this theological tradition was in opposition to this prevailing tendency, and the comparative depreciation of the results of civilization by Rousseau might, as I said, seem to reinforce it in so far as this also saw in the actual history of civilization the story of a corruption rather than of an improvement. But it could not be said that its emphasis on the need of divine grace or its requirement of the conviction of sin, as the first step

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to be taken in the spiritual life, was reinforced by the new philosophy. Rather that philosophy was marked by reliance upon and a trust in the native instincts of that human heart which the sterner schools of theology had regarded as "desperately wicked." Despite this great difference, however, between the tradition of Christian theology and the teaching associated with the name of Rousseau, it is here (as Lord Morley points out in the book to which I have already referred) that he was a pioneer of religious revival. Voltaire and the deists of the generation before Rousseau had believed in a God (you may still see at Ferney the church which, as the inscription on its portico proclaims, *Deo Erexit Voltaire*) whom it was indeed reasonable and right to honour, but with whom no intimate communion was to be enjoyed. Rousseau's conception of God may indeed have been no less vague: but God was for him an object of ecstatic emotion. He could lie murmuring *O Grand Etre, Grand Etre*, rapt in feelings of adoration which would have been foolishness to Voltaire. Appearing when and where it did, this new kind of piety showed that one must either pass beyond the cold deism of Voltaire to the open atheism of some of the Encyclo-

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pædists, or with Rousseau to a more intimate realization in feeling of a Divinity which, as a mere inference from the order of Nature, was rapidly fading from men's view. Rousseau stands for the sentiment of God, as he does also for the sentiment of Nature, but rather for *sentiment* in both cases than for the effort to *know* either. Thus the two great contemporaries, born in the same year, 1770, the German philosopher Hegel and the English poet Wordsworth, alike pre-suppose Rousseau, but pass beyond him in an effort to *know* what Rousseau did but *feel*.

The great French Revolution (which was not only a *French* Revolution) may be regarded from one point of view as the explosion of the combined forces of Rationalism and its opposite and successor, Sentimentalism—forces typified respectively by two great writers, Voltaire and Rousseau. Rationalism, with its emphasis on clear and distinct understanding, its neglect of obscure processes of growth and development, its corresponding indifference to tradition, had undermined genuine belief in the political and religious traditions which were embodied in the structure of Church and State. But by itself Rationalism was

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too careless of sentiment in general to afford a substitute for the sentiments which the traditional order of society had created. It was, on the whole, aristocratic, for clear and distinct understanding is plainly for the few and not for the common mass of men; it did not therefore aim at disturbing the ideas of the people at large, who were perhaps only to be kept in order by the help of superstitious beliefs in rewards and penalties supposed to be entailed by obedience or disobedience to laws whose true ground they could not be expected to appreciate. The Rationalist's very lack of sympathy with the dogmas of the established religion made him powerless, and not very desirous, to disturb their hold over those who were not guided by reason.

The Sentimentalism of Rousseau, though in a way the very opposite of this Rationalism, came in to complete what it had left incomplete. Just as the *sentiment* of Nature, of man's natural equality, was able to take the *heart* out of an interested belief in aristocratic superiority which Rationalism had already deprived of any convincing sanctions, so too the *sentiment* of undogmatic religion was able to touch with a certain enthusiasm the alienation of men from an established system in the *truth* of the

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principles underlying which they themselves, and not only they but even many of the official representatives of the established system itself, had ceased to have any convinced belief. An order of society, then, in Church and State alike, which neither in *belief* nor yet in *feeling* had a serious faith in itself, was bound to go down before the rationalistic belief in an abstract theory to which the traditional institutions by no means corresponded, as soon as this *belief* in the abstract theory was reinforced by the *sentiment* for human equality and the common nature of man, in which high and low were alike. We must think, then, of Rousseau's teaching for our present purpose together with the revolutionary consequences of that teaching, consequences which were dependent upon an abstract theory of human equality, a sentiment for the common nature of man, which led to impatience with the historical institutions which had produced distinctions, whether social, national or racial, among those who shared in that nature, and which it was thought must be swept away, or, at any rate, allowed to decay and left to die, if that common nature was to attain to its full natural expression.

I said that there were other developments of

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Rousseau's teaching on which I wished to say a word before proceeding to show how the Evangelical movement in Anglican theology reflected this Sentimentalist movement—developments which I associated with the names of Kant and Goethe respectively.

Kant tells us himself that he was by nature bent a scientific enquirer or researcher, and began by despising the common folk who had no part in the pursuit of learning and knowledge to which his own life was devoted; but that he was led by the study of Rousseau to abandon this overwhelming estimate of the dignity of his own special vocation, and to learn reverence for the common humanity which binds us to all, whether high or low, who possess the simple consciousness of duty, as distinct from and, it may be, opposed to inclination. It is, however, to be noted that this sense of a common humanity takes in Kant, in accordance with the peculiarity of his personal character, the form of an austere respect for duty rather than the form of benevolent sentiment; yet we have his own word for it that the great master of sentiment, Rousseau, was his master here; and it is not without significance that, as the movement which culminated in Rousseau had, before Rousseau's day, taken a religious form in the Pietism of Ger-

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many (of which our English Methodism and, through Methodism, our English Evangelicalism were direct descendants), it was in a Pietistic household that Kant had been brought up, and that an eminent Pietistic clergyman had been the first person of superior position to interest himself in the saddler's boy who was to become the most illustrious thinker of modern times. And though there remained very little of the Pietist in the mature Kant, either as regards opinion or as regards sentiment, yet the depth and strength of his moral experience, the witness of which no difficulty in reconciling the freedom which it required with the determinism no less decidedly postulated by our scientific investigations could avail to make him doubt for a moment, may well have owed something to what his schoolfellow, the classical scholar Ruhnken, writing to Kant after both had become famous, calls "that harsh, yet useful and by no means to be regretted discipline which we underwent from the fanatics."

The poet Goethe indeed considered it Kant's great service, by his insistence on duty rather than on feeling, to have lifted his cultivated countrymen from the slough of sentimentality into which, to a great extent under the influence of Rousseau's writings,

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they had been sinking. This sentimentality had taken in the second generation a profoundly pessimistic form. In English literature we may take the poet Byron as the type of this development; and Goethe, who had known by experience the sense of dissatisfaction and despair which it engendered, had purged himself of it by writing the *Sorrows of Werther*, a story of love and suicide, suggested by the actual life and death of a young contemporary of his own under the influence of an indulged melancholy of this kind, induced in his case by a hopeless passion for another man's wife. We must remember, then, that we must associate with the general tendency of thought and feeling to which I have attached the name of Rousseau, and which, as I propose to show, was echoed in Anglican theology by the Evangelical movement, not only the sentiment of Rousseau himself for Nature and for a God immanent in Nature, but also the indifference to history which was so markedly manifested both in the political ideals of the revolutionary period and in the moral philosophy of Kant. For Kant dwells upon our common nature as rational beings, and the beauty which belongs to us as such, and takes little account of the different standards characteristic of different stages of historical na-

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tionalities; or of the historical process through which men have been brought to a realization of their common humanity and the conscience matured to the point at which it would respond to Kant's teaching about the "categorical imperative" or unconditional command of duty. And besides this again we have to remember, as a feature of the general tendency which the Evangelical movement represents in Anglican theology, that vivid realization of the disappointment and vanity of life which is so often caused by reaction from highly-strung sentiment, and which, as we saw, obtained literary embodiment in Goethe's *Sorrows of Werther* as well as in much of the poetry of Byron.

Let us now turn at last to the Evangelical movement in the Church of England, and see how the various features of the great spiritual movement of the age are there represented.

It is obvious, in the first place, that this Evangelicalism reacts against the rationalism of the period in which it arose by its emphasis on *feeling*, on the *heart*. "Lord," says the poet of the movement, "it is my chief complaint, that my love is weak and faint." A new stress is laid on conversion, less as a changed course of conduct than as a conscious difference of attitude towards God; sacramental in-

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corporation into the Church and intellectual conviction of the truth of Christianity are secondary to the first-hand experience which is attested by the crushing sense of sin, the personal response to the offer of salvation, the inward assurance of pardon, which marked the stages of the spiritual drama of the individual sinner's reconciliation to God in Christ. It would, of course, be absurd to suppose that these things were unknown before the end of the eighteenth century, or are only found in those whom one would call Evangelicals in theology. But unquestionably these things stand out for Evangelicalism, as they do not for other forms of Christian piety, as the distinctive features of the religious life; unquestionably there was, at the period of which I am speaking, a rediscovery of their importance in which we cannot but recognize the form taken by the sentimental revolt against rationalism in the minds of those children of the age for whom religion, rather than science or art or politics, was the principal interest of life.

I have already quoted some lines of Cowper, the sweetest singer of English Evangelicalism. Do we not see in his sad despair, to which he gave such memorable and terrible expression in his poem of *The*

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Castaway, something akin to the *unglückliche Bewusstsein*, "the unhappy consciousness," as the philosopher Hegel was afterwards to call such states of mind, which brought into fashion such suicide as that of Jerusalem, the original of Goethe's *Werther* and which breathes in the pages of Senancour's *Obermann* (the deep impression made by which upon himself Matthew Arnold has commemorated in two well-known poems, *In Memory of the Author of Obermann* and *Obermann Once More*), or again in those of the *René* of the great French prose poet Chateaubriand? There is indeed a true kinship between the gentle recluse of Olney and these sad spirits, but yet, even though the disordered intellect of Cowper, fastening on the fearful dogma which he had learned from his Calvinistic teachers, made him in theory the most hopeless of them all, his sincere piety in fact touches his melancholy with a sort of gentle radiance which that of his less religious fellows lacks:

Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian when he sings:
It is the Lord who rises
With healing in his wings.

To the Evangelical, in the famous phrase of New-

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man, who in his *Apologia* fully acknowledges his debt to the Evangelical teaching under which he received his earliest religious impressions, the "two, and two only, supreme and luminous self-evident beings" were himself and his Creator. A certain individualism of outlook arising from preoccupation with the inner drama of one's own spiritual life is another feature in which Evangelicalism reflects the character of the great movement of which Rousseau is the literary protagonist; and with this individualism of outlook goes a lack of interest in the individual's historical setting and antecedents, and a consequent general lack of historical perspective which, as we have already seen, characterized the political ideals of the Revolution and the moral philosophy of Kant, and which is no less evident in some conspicuous features of Evangelical theology; for instance, in its tendency to isolate the Scriptures, to disparage the authority of ecclesiastical tradition, and to belittle the mediation of the Church.

Such individualism of outlook must not, however, be regarded as implying egoism or selfishness. No doubt selfishness may have sometimes clothed itself in the forms of Evangelical piety, as in other disguises which lay ready to its hand, but the natural

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result of Evangelical individualism was not selfishness but rather a passionate love of individual souls. The great outburst of missionary zeal which marked the beginning of the nineteenth century, the abolition of the slave-trade, the Factory Acts, associated respectively with the names of Carey and Martyn, of Wilberforce and of Shaftesbury, are a sufficient proof of this. No movement has been richer in works of practical philanthropy than Evangelicalism. And here too once more it is true to the general character of the wider movement with which it is historically connected, while touching it with a religious fervour which it has elsewhere sometimes lacked. We have seen how the study of Rousseau converted Kant to a respect for all men, simple as well as learned, which found expression in his ethical doctrine that we are "to treat humanity in our own person, or in that of another, always as an end and never merely as a means"; and we have seen, too, how the same Rousseau's teaching fired the zeal of the French revolutionaries for the rights of man. The politics of English Evangelicalism were marked by a characteristically English sobriety and conservatism which had little in common with the violence and radicalism of continental republicanism; but the two were less

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apart in their ultimate inspiration than their respective followers would have readily allowed. And indeed it is not at all my intention to suggest in this account of the relation of Evangelicalism to the European movement with which I have brought it into connexion, that its kinship with that movement was something of which Evangelicals or their leaders were for the most part aware. The names of Rousseau and of Kant would to the majority of them have been the names of dangerous enemies of the truth they prized; the former would have been familiar, but execrated; the latter unfamiliar but, so far as known, thought of as belonging to a world outside the circle of those who shared an experience which was to them the one pearl of great price, and which they were too apt to think inseparable from certain ways of thinking and speaking which they had come to regard as its necessary tokens and evidences.

But I have already pointed out in my first lecture that the isolation characteristic of Anglican theology often comes out in the fact that it echoes world movements without intending to do so or being aware that it does so. We shall see this illustrated again in the history of the next great movement, that which has often been named the Oxford Movement, because it

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is at Oxford that it first found an articulate voice in *The Christian Year* and the *Tracts for the Times*.

3

Just as the Rationalism of the seventeenth and earlier eighteenth centuries had awakened a reaction in which a one-sided stress was laid upon sentiment, so the Revolutionary movement of the end of the eighteenth century, which tried as it were to cut off the entail and interrupt the continuity of the political and social tradition of Europe, called forth an enthusiasm for that tradition which had been dormant in the preceding period. The outrage done by the Revolution to historical sentiment evoked a revival of that sentiment, which was to become a marked characteristic of the mind of the nineteenth century and to form one of the chief points of distinction between it and the mind of preceding periods. This evoking of the historical sentiment by a revulsion from the deliberate breach with the past which the French Revolution, carrying into practice the rationalistic ideas and individualistic sentiments of the age which was drawing to its close, had endeavoured to effect, is very well illustrated in the magnificent eloquence of Burke's anti-revolutionary writings, with

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their reassertion of that ancient view of society as an organism with a life of its own which the individualism natural to a rationalistic age had tended to obscure. In Burke we hear the new note of enthusiasm for the past, an enthusiasm not such as was common enough among the Revolutionary party for a remote past which, because it was fancied as discontinuous with the present, could be idealized as a primitive age of simple happiness and unsophisticated virtue; nor even for classical antiquity imagined, as it was by the Revolutionary students of Plutarch's *Lives*, as a vanished world of heroic republican patriotism; but for the past with whose institutions those under which the enthusiast himself had been bred were in direct continuity—that is, in the actual case, for the past of mediæval Europe. This enthusiasm shaped the so-called Romantic movement in literature, by which the generation after the Revolution was carried away, and whose most typical representative was, on the whole, Sir Walter Scott. But this Romantic literature was only one side of a vaster movement. This vaster movement was characterized throughout by a new recognition of the value of elements in life which Rationalism had tended to overlook and which the Revolution had threatened to destroy. The forces

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of mere reaction which existed and which, after the fall of Napoleon, attained great power in the political and social world, sometimes formed alliances with the higher ideals of the time; and the career of Napoleon himself influenced in more than one way the current of feeling. For as in Napoleon the spirit of Revolutionary France had shown itself aggressive and tyrannical beyond any other, the love of liberty, at any rate outside of France, came to ally itself with loyalty to national institutions which the Napoleonic order had imperilled; while, on the other hand, the solid merits of the highly civilized system of government which Napoleon had substituted in many places for worn out and corrupt ones raised the standard for those among whom he introduced them and inspired new ideals for the future. The incarnation on the continent of Europe of the spirit of this age, which we may call, with the editors of the *Cambridge Modern History*, the Age of Restoration, was the great poet Goethe. He had, as I said before, thrown off the sentimentalism of his youth, a sentimentalism ultimately inspired by Rousseau, in writing the *Sorrows of Werther*. He had been among the initiators of the romantic literary movement; his story of *Götz von Berlichingen*, which served Walter

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Scott for a model, his *Faust* and his *Wilhelm Meister* are the mature achievement of this whole period. He ended his long life, not yet ninety years ago, as the minister of the small German state of Saxe-Weimar, of which his friend the Duke Karl August was sovereign. And in this, too, he was typical, in his attempt to start anew with the old tradition instead of, as the Revolutionary generation had proposed, without it. There is a famous passage of his *Faust* in which he speaks of those who distinguish and divide and analyse, while "the spiritual bond," which holds together the whole that they thus dissect, escapes them. This was perhaps aimed at Kant, who in part of his work was the philosophical representative of the Revolutionary spirit, rationalistic, analytical, destructive. But there were constructive elements in Kant as well. The stern manliness of his ethics was in strong contrast with the sentimental laxity which was coming into fashion when they appeared; and the emphasis in the third of his three great treatises, called Critiques, upon the living organism certainly cannot be understood if "the spiritual bond" is ignored. These constructive elements in Kant, and especially the latter, the emphasis on the organism, Goethe fully appreciated as helping on

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the work of building up, of reconstruction, which was laid on his generation, whose lot had fallen in the years which followed the great pulling down. It was all of a piece with this that the same Goethe, when sitting in the botanic gardens at Padua under the palm tree which they still show you there, should have struck upon the principle of metamorphosis—that the flowers of plants are but transformed leaves—and so become one of the pioneers of the evolutionary idea, which was to have so great a history in the nineteenth century. Readers of Carlyle know how highly Carlyle rated Goethe's victorious achievement. "In his inspired melody" he says in *Sartor Resartus*, "even in these rag-gathering and rag-burning days, man's life again begins, were it but afar off, to be divine."

The work of another great German, the philosopher Hegel, is to be brought into connexion with the movement of which Goethe is on the whole the most imposing figure. Kant had spoken as if reason makes demands which can never be satisfied, creates ideas which can never be verified in an actual experience, gives laws which ought always to be obeyed, but perhaps never are. Hegel, on the other hand, endeavoured to find in studying the world, which he

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took to be the work of Reason, as it stands before us in religious and political institutions, in the Church, in the State, in the history alike of social life and of philosophic theory, that which Kant could only find in an unrealized ideal in the critic's mind, to which the facts failed to correspond. Thus Hegel helped to turn the current of men's thoughts into two at least of the channels in which they have since been running. By giving *history* a standing, so to speak, in philosophy, through his doctrine that the true significance of things and of reality as a whole could not be understood apart from the way in which they had come to be, in which we should try to discover not a mere series of accidents, but the necessary and inevitable unfolding of the nature of whatever we are dealing with, he gave a new dignity to historical study, much as Bacon in his day had given a new dignity to the study of nature; and he also made the notion of *development* central, in doing which he showed the way which the biological sciences were, especially after Darwin, to follow. Moreover, by seeing in the real world around us—natural, social, intellectual—the work of a larger Reason than yours or mine, in which your reason and mine are rooted, and a work which we must endeavour therefore to

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understand before we set about trying to *improve* it, he helped to reverse the old rationalistic prejudice in favour of considering as rational only that which could be devised by the individual starting afresh, as it were, for himself, as though his mind had no roots in a larger Reason manifested already in the actual structure of Reality.

Besides Goethe and Hegel, I will mention one other great man of this period; a poet of our own, William Wordsworth. That sense of the eternal freshness of nature and of the fundamental realities of human life which in his Revolutionary youth made him welcome the dawn of freedom in France:

Joy was it in that Dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very heaven:

did not die within him after the later course of the Revolution, with its excesses of cruelty and bloodshed, and Napoleon's struggle with England had alienated his sympathy. It lived on, but in union with an ever-deepening sense of the sanctity and permanence of the habitual and the traditional, of those things whereof we can say, as he says himself of Burns:

Deep in the general heart of man
Their power abides.

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He was thus a true representative of the period of which I have chosen him as a typical figure; and not less so in his profound consciousness of a "*life* which rolls through all things"—a consciousness which sets him far apart from the Rationalism whose God, where it acknowledged one, was thought of as outside the world which he had made and then left, as it were, to itself, except it were perhaps for occasional miraculous interferences; and it brings him near to such a thought of the whole of Nature, inanimate as well as animate, explicable throughout on the principles of organic growth, as found just after his time a grandiose if, in detail, an unsatisfactory expression in the so-called Synthetic Philosophy of Herbert Spencer; or as, with more eloquence and sympathy, if not with equal vastness of design, and with a more penetrating understanding of the problems involved, has been suggested in our own days, under the name of Creative Evolution, by M. Bergson.

Of the three figures which I have taken as representative of the movement, the chief *motif* of which the Oxford movement echoes, so to say, in Anglican theology, the third and last has of course a historical connexion with the High Church movement in the Church of England through his personal interest in

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it in its earlier, his later, days, and through the part played in it, with his approval and sympathy, by his distinguished nephew Christopher, afterwards Bishop of Lincoln. My own father, who, as an undergraduate at Cambridge, was secretary and a moving spirit of the Cambridge Camden Society, which sought to give practical effect to the interest excited by the Tractarians in the outward form and setting of worship, remembered how the great poet, when on a visit to his brother the Master of Trinity, allowed the young enthusiast to show him the Round Church restored under their auspices to what they at any rate supposed to be a condition more in keeping with its original purpose and with the spirit of its founders.

The High Church movement reflected in several ways the greater movement of European thought of which I took Goethe, Hegel, Wordsworth as typical figures. It reflected it in its interest in the historical continuity of the present with the past which the Revolution had sought to interrupt; in its idealization, both in Church and State, of the principle of authority which the Revolution had defied, and (in its later rather than in its earlier stages) in its stress on the conception of organic growth or development. This last feature was, as I say, later than the others

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in making its appearance. If one had to suggest the most obvious difference between the theology of the earlier Tractarians and that of the contributors to *Lux Mundi* and their followers, one would, I think, find it in the contrast between the tendency of the former to regard the Church of the present as the legal legatee of the authority of Christ and his apostles and that of the latter to present it rather as the form which, by a regular process of development, the organism into which the divine life had by the Incarnation been infused has now come to wear. No doubt the contributors to *Lux Mundi* belonged to a generation which had been profoundly affected by the impulse given to an evolutionary view of things by the discoveries and hypotheses of Darwin. But, as has often been observed, the idea of development had, before the appearance of the *Origin of Species*, and apparently without any influence exerted by German philosophy, which had already (as I mentioned when speaking of Hegel) begun to lay stress upon it, been introduced into Anglican theology by the famous *Essay on Development*, the appearance of which marked the passage of Newman from the Anglican to the Roman communion. It is not the only, though it is the most conspicuous, instance, in which in the

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course of his life the original genius of the great Tractarian anticipated in forms—sometimes strange forms—adapted to the circumstances of his own inner life at the time, thoughts which, when suggested in connexions of more general interest, were to become current in much wider circles.

In respect of the idea of Development, there cannot, I think, be any doubt that Newman's use of it in his *Essay* assisted in facilitating the introduction of it into the theology both of the Anglican Church and of the Church his submission to which he had defended by his view of its variations from primitive Christianity as legitimate *developments* of what must have been externally so different. But the introduction of the conception of Development into theology must in any case have taken place, when it had once become the ruling idea of the age in all departments of thought.

When speaking of Evangelicalism, I called attention to the value which it attached to *feeling*, as evidence that we were dealing with a personal experience at first hand and not with something merely inferential or traditional; and to its *individualism*, which was yet no selfish egoism, but rather the inspiration of a love of individual souls, and hence the source of

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more than one great movement of practical philanthropy. This individualism, however, unquestionably tended, as we saw, to an unhistorical outlook, and to the limiting of religious sympathy to a set distinguished by the use of certain phrases and modes of piety rather than to the widening of it by the recognition that, through participation in the same historic process and in a common life transcending the individual and nourished by social sacraments, it was possible to enjoy a genuine union with ages and communities using different phrases and modes of piety from our own.

We may now ask how the Tractarian or High Church school in the Church of England stood with respect to these features of the movement against which it represents a reaction. Nothing is more distinctive of it than its dislike, even its horror, of emotionalism. The American essayist Oliver Wendell Holmes has justly pointed, as typical of its whole attitude, to some of the most haunting verses in *The Christian Year*:

God only and good angels look
Behind the blissful screen,
As when triumphant o'er his foes
The Son of God at midnight rose
By all but heaven unseen.

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An austere reticence about oneself, a distrust of sentiment, a delicate reverence in speaking or even in thinking of holy things, are pre-eminently characteristic of Tractarian piety. And with this goes a revulsion from preoccupation with one's own feelings, even one's own experience, from what the philosophers call subjectivity to a reliance upon what is regarded as objective, as independent of our moods and views and theories, upon historical facts, upon an authoritative ministry, upon sacraments instituted to convey by outward and visible signs a grace which is not communicated to the signs by our faith, though it may be hindered in its operation upon us by our want of it. Many of the older generation of High Churchmen shrank from the use of the word "conversion" to describe an episode in the life of a baptized person who had never fallen away into a course of evil living and neglect of religion. When so used it was associated in their minds with what seemed to them a disparagement of baptism and confirmation, and an elevation of a merely emotional crisis to the place in the Christian life which properly belonged to a divinely instituted ordinance. The High Churchmen of to-day are not afraid to recognise facts and to use language of which their predecessors

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fought shy; and the experience which the Evangelicals called "conversion" is now studied by psychologists whose interest in it is not religious at all. But some of us can remember Tractarian households in which it could not be mentioned without explanation, and without apology for the supposed implications of the phrase.

The drama of the inner life on which the attention of the Evangelicals was concentrated was described by them in language which, so far as it was Scriptural was derived from St. Paul's Epistles; and it was what they understood (rightly or no) St. Paul to have meant by "his Gospel" that was to them the good news of salvation, from their insistence on which their party-designation was derived. By reaction from this, the Tractarians, as Dean Church in his book on *The Oxford Movement* pointed out, laid a special emphasis upon the Gospels and the record therein contained of the Saviour's earthly life, which they thought the Evangelicals had allowed themselves to subordinate unduly in their teaching and their devotion to the theological exposition in the Epistles of the scheme of salvation through his death. This special emphasis on the Gospels was in keeping with a general emphasis on the historical rather than on

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the emotional element in Christian doctrine, which betrays the kinship of Tractarianism with which I have called (following the editors of the *Cambridge Modern History*) the Restoration period of European history.

The stress laid by the Tractarians on the idea of the Church was of course very closely connected with this emphasis on the historical element in Christianity by which they were at once distinguished from the Evangelicals and linked with the contemporary movement of European thought. It is to be remembered that most, if not all, of the other ecclesiastical movements which originated about the same time as the Oxford movement shared with it this feature of emphasis on the idea of the Church, no mere department of the State, but an independent spiritual society, the appointed channel of divine grace to the individual Christian. This is true of Irvingism, which is a little older than the Oxford movement, of the movement which led to the disruption of the Scottish Church a little later, and also of the almost exactly contemporary movement in the Danish Church associated with the name of Grundtvig. Even in the Church of England Tractarianism did not stand alone in its stress upon Churchmanship. Newman him-

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self in the *Apologia* admits that he learned his belief in the substantive existence of the Church as an independent corporation and his anti-Erastianism from Whately, who certainly had no other point of agreement with Tractarianism. Whately was a luminary of what has been called the old Oriel school, as distinguished from the new, which was Tractarian. This older school was called Noetic, as though one should say Intellectualist, and its affinities were much more with the later Broad or Liberal party in the Church of England than with that which is designated by the epithet "High."

A greater man than any of those lately mentioned, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, was also much concerned with the conception of the Church. Carlyle, in his *Life of Sterling*, indeed fathers upon him what he calls the "spectral Puseyisms, monstrous illusory Hybrids and ecclesiastical Chimeras which now roam the earth in a very lamentable manner." But perhaps Coleridge was rather the godfather than the begetter of the High Church school; indeed he died before the Oxford movement had well begun. No doubt, like his friend Wordsworth, he would have been in sympathy with it so far as it was expressive of the Platonism which had drawn him from his

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early Unitarianism into deliberate adhesion to the Church of England; and so far as it coincided with the general bent of his mind, typical therein of the temper of this period of reconstruction and restoration after the great Revolution, towards veneration for traditional sanctities. It is to be observed that he, like Wordsworth, had a nephew in the movement, the friend and biographer of John Keble. But his influence was probably more direct upon the parallel movement represented by Frederick Denison Maurice, who, under the influence of Coleridge, passed—like Coleridge himself—from the Unitarianism in which he had been brought up to historical Christianity as taught in the Church of England, and by the romantic novelist and Christian Socialist Charles Kingsley. With these may here perhaps be named a man of different antecedents, and not intimately connected with them by close personal or party ties, a man of perhaps more original religious genius than any of those that I have already mentioned except Newman: I mean the great preacher Frederick Robertson. Beginning as an Evangelical, he came to stand apart from both the Evangelical and Tractarian schools. Though these three men did not in any strict sense belong to one school, and were united,

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Maurice and Kingsley by common political sympathies, and all three by a certain liberality of mind and temper which made it hard for them to breathe freely either in the Evangelical or in the Tractarian atmosphere, rather than by any particular doctrinal programme of their own; yet the theology of them all, while neither Evangelical nor Tractarian, was, no less than were the theologies so described, the expression of a deep personal religious experience, which inclined them far more to the assertion of the substantial truth of historical Christianity than to negative criticism of its formularies.

I shall come later to speak of the Broad Church school more at length; but at present I only wish to point out that the general tendencies of European thought which were echoed in Anglican theology by the Oxford movement are also represented in this sphere by a parallel movement, which could trace its descent to Coleridge, who was the principal channel through which the influence of the great philosophical development in Germany that began with Kant affected the higher thought of England during the first years of the nineteenth century. This movement, though never organized as a party, and so remaining without such a dramatic history as the Ox-

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ford movement can boast, has profoundly affected later developments of thought in the Church of England, even within the High Church and Evangelical schools themselves. For in the former the Christian Socialism which was inaugurated by Maurice and Kingsley has found a congenial home, while a theologian who was more truly the successor of Maurice than of any other divine of the preceding generation, Bishop Westcott, has exercised an influence upon both schools which did not leave either of them where it was before.

There are, however, two other features of the Oxford movement upon which I would say a few words before I go on to speak of the Liberal or Broad Church movement in Anglican theology, both of which illustrate its character as echoing the general tendencies of the period which I have called that of the Restoration. Those are its relations to the Roman Catholic Church, and its encouragement of learning and thought. There is a close connexion between the two. The enemies of the Oxford movement have often seen in it little or nothing but an approximation to Roman Catholicism, into which, when honest and consistent, it was bound to be absorbed; and the submission to the Roman See of the greatest of its

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leaders, as well as of many others of lesser note, seemed to give colour to this estimate of its character. It would, however, be a juster account of the matter to see in it, as I have already suggested that we may, the representative of the interest, characteristic of the period during which it arose, in historical continuity, whether in Christianity or elsewhere. This was bound to place it in regard to the communion which represents the main stock of Western Christianity in an attitude of respect and sympathy very different from that of the Evangelicals, who had tended to think of the history of the Church as the record of a corruption of its New Testament purity, from which the Reformation marked a partial recovery; and of the Roman See as the centre of a grand apostacy, prefigured by the description of the harlot in the Apocalypse and by the Pauline prophecies of the "man of sin." But when, in opposition to Evangelicalism, it "disinterred" (to quote Mark Pattison again) "the remains of Christian antiquity," it encouraged a serious study of these which was bound to show that neither the conventional Roman nor the conventional Protestant picture of the course of ecclesiastical history was a true representation of the facts, and to reinforce the traditional po-

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sition of the Church of England as taking a middle course between the two, wherein it could go forward without either discarding its Catholic heritage, or, by submission to the claims of Rome to be the sole depository of the infallible guidance promised to the Church, endorsing all additions to, and subtractions from that heritage which have from time to time been made by Papal authority. The Tractarian movement, representing as it did the reaction against the sentimentalism represented in Anglican theology by the Evangelicals, stood from the first on the side of learning, and for the full use of art and knowledge in the service of faith. It has often been observed that, of the great Christian dogmas, Evangelicalism laid stress especially on the Atonement, Tractarianism on the Incarnation. It is easy to see that it is the latter emphasis rather than the former that tends to the encouragement of all the higher human activities as capable of sanctification through the taking of our manhood into God.

4

But while it would be to miss a very important feature of Tractarian theology to ignore its encouragement of learning, and the value which it

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set upon things of the mind, it is the third of the schools into which the Anglican Church of today is generally thought of as divided, the Liberal or Broad Church school, that has laid most stress not upon the *emotional*, or upon the *institutional*, but upon the *intellectual* side of religious life. It will be observed that I have not mentioned here the *practical* side. I do not think that any of the three schools can be regarded as failing to emphasise this, and thus stress upon its importance cannot be regarded as specially distinctive of any one of them, although no doubt there might be some differences in the direction of the practical activities encouraged by each which would to some extent reflect the differences in their outlook.

The subject of this last section of these lectures, which will attempt to deal with recent Anglican theology, presents certain difficulties of its own to the lecturer. Up to this point it has been possible to point to a general tendency characteristic of the whole thought of a period, and also to a school of Anglican theology originating in that period and reflecting the tone and temper which were found to be distinctive of it. Thus the Evangelical school reflected the tone

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and temper of the Sentimental movement, of which Rousseau was the chief literary representative, and associated with the French Revolution; the Tractarian school reflected the tone and temper of the Romantic movement associated with the period of the Restoration which followed the fall of Napoleon. But we are too near to the last half-century to see it in the proper perspective and identify its characteristics as we have done with its predecessors, and the theology of the Liberal—or, to use a more recent designation, Modernist—school, which has arisen in the Church of England in the course of it, has not the same well-marked character as that of the Evangelical or that of the Tractarian school. This is indeed what is to be expected in a school whose leading principle is not so much the enforcement of a particular aspect of religious experience as the demand that every new suggestion should be given a fair hearing, and that the hospitality of the Church to opinions and pious practices be as wide and comprehensive as is possible consistently with the maintenance of her spiritual identity. Moreover, whereas, as I pointed out, the Evangelicals and Tractarians reflected the great movements of the periods in which

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they originated without intending to do so, and often without being aware that they were doing so, the Liberal or Modernist school finds its special vocation in the conscious appropriation of whatever in knowledge or practice or aspiration can be found in the world around fit for employment by the Church in its task of reconciling men to God. This conscious dependence upon the general state of thought and feeling makes it harder and not easier to exhibit the school which is thus dependent upon it as reflecting that general state of thought and feeling. Its correspondences with it are less likely to be undesigned, and more likely to be artificial and un instructive. It will not therefore, I ask you to believe, be merely due to my own incompetence if my treatment of this last part of our subject has, to a greater extent than my treatment of the earlier periods, a somewhat casual and disconnected character.

It is probable that, if asked the question what was the outstanding feature of the intellectual life of Europe during the past fifty years, most people would point to the immense progress made by the natural sciences. It is true that the phrase "the bankruptcy of science" has been bandied about in some quarters, and one may admit that there is less disposition than

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in a former generation to suppose that progress in the natural sciences is likely to do all that was once by sanguine admirers expected of it. Even if it should bring about the destruction of the religion, the morality, the philosophy that we have known, it will not be able to supply their place. We are also now, especially since the reconsideration of the doctrines of Newton rendered necessary by the investigations of Professor Einstein, less confident than we were about the frame, so to speak, within which we had taken for granted that all our descriptions of the physical universe were to be placed. But all this in no way detracts from the truth of the statement that the increase of natural knowledge during the last fifty years has been the outstanding fact of the intellectual life of Europe, that many vast regions of reality have been invaded, if not conquered, by scientific enquirers, which half a century ago lay beyond their ken. I am thinking particularly of the regions of organic and psychical life. Important, however, as this great advance in natural knowledge has been for Christian theology, I am disposed to think that a greater immediate and direct effect upon it must be attributed to another intellectual activity of the age, that of historical criticism, on account of its result

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in revolutionizing the traditional view of the Scriptures. I am somewhat disposed to think that the completeness of this revolution is hardly appreciated by those who have lived through it. It is not merely (as is sometimes thought) a question of the disappearance of the belief in verbal inspiration; it involves a totally different attitude towards the Bible from that which was common to all schools of Anglican theology in the middle of the last century, and I venture to say without hesitation that it is not conceivable that the work of this revolution can be undone, unless perhaps by a retrogression from civilization into barbarianism, such as has no doubt occurred before in human history and may yet occur again.

The study of the "higher"—that is, the historical—as opposed to the "lower" or textual criticism of the Bible was slow in making way in England, and it was at first very tentatively and timidly that even the boldest spirits among those who were not definitely opponents of Christianity approached the question of its inspiration. Coleridge himself, in his *Confessions of an Inquiring Spirit*, while arguing that the Scriptures could not reasonably be held to be dictated throughout in every detail by infallible intelligence, says:

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In the books of Moses and once or twice in the prophecy of Jeremiah, I find it . . . asserted that not only the words were given, but the recording of the same enjoined by the special command of God and doubtless executed under the special guidance of the Divine Spirit. As to all such passages therefore, there can be no dispute: and all others in which the words are by the sacred historian declared to have been the Word of the Lord supernaturally communicated, I receive with a degree of confidence proportioned to the confidence required of me by the writer himself, and to the claims he himself makes on my belief.

What scholar now could even imagine himself making this kind of reservation of passages which happen to claim divine authority by the use of a phrase which was part of the common form of Hebrew prophecy from the critical treatment to which, had this phrase not occurred in them, they would have been exposed? But even some thirty years or so after Coleridge's death, when, as Browning puts it,

Our *Essays and Reviews* debate
Begins to tell on the public mind
And Colenso's words have weight,

the poet himself—certainly no mere timorous representative of conventional orthodoxy—seems, from the context in which these lines occur, to hint that he is

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interested in the pioneer attempts at Biblical criticism to which he refers only as tending to shake men's confidence in Christianity, a religion which, in his opinion, could afford to disregard objections based on critical difficulties in the strength of an appeal to its profound comprehension of human nature, in that, as he says, it

. . . taught original sin,
The corruption of man's heart.

It is by no means my intention to attempt to trace the gradual conversion of Anglican theology to a frank acceptance of the critical attitude towards the Bible; or to describe the share taken in the work by the great Cambridge scholars, Lightfoot, Hort, Westcott, who accustomed their fellow Churchmen to a scholarship which combined learning and thoroughness with reverence and deep religious conviction; by one happily still with us, Charles Gore, who, when Principal of the Pusey House, by his essay in *Lux Mundi* on *The Holy Spirit and Inspiration* obtained for critical views of the Old Testament admission and acceptance in quarters which up to that time would have shrunk from them as involving disloyalty to Christ—for had not Dr. Pusey made the least ten-

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able of traditional ascriptions, that of the book of Daniel to its reputed author, an article of faith on the ground that our Lord's authority was pledged to it?—or by two great Oxford scholars, now no longer living, Samuel Rolles Driver, and another more lately lost, the beloved and lamented William Sanday. I am, however, convinced that, as I said, a revolution has taken place in our views of Scripture, the full extent of which is scarcely yet appreciated, and the effects of which are destined to be very far-reaching. Old ways of speaking and of thinking, based on an obsolete theory, may still linger among us, but they are doomed, however slowly, to disappear. Hort once with a certain impatience blamed his colleague Westcott in a letter for being “hopelessly subjective”; and with reason, for—eminent scholar as he was—he was capable of allowing that a passage of Scripture might be regarded as bearing two alternative meanings at once, when each alternative might teach a spiritual lesson. This would not be a possibility to be reckoned with in examining the meaning of any other book; and Westcott, by admitting it in the case of the Bible, showed that he did not yet stand where Jowett had stood years before in his essay on *The Interpretation of Scripture* contributed to *Essays and Re-*

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views. Lightfoot, while his massive learning set a high standard for Anglican scholarship in the study of the Bible, and his sobriety and caution made him a severe judge of the over-hasty work of men who too readily adopted theories subversive of traditional views, was, as the candid Hort admitted, "no thinker." For a true estimate of St. Paul one required, so Hort observed, a combination of Lightfoot's learning with Jowett's philosophical insight. The reference was to an enterprise which the famous Master of Balliol had undertaken in collaboration with Arthur Penhryn Stanley, afterwards Dean of Westminster, of editing the Epistles of St. Paul. Of this enterprise there was accomplished a commentary on *Corinthians* by Stanley, and one on *Thessalonians*, *Galatians* and *Romans* by Jowett. It was in this last that Hort recognized a philosophical value which was not possessed by the more learned and scholarly work of Lightfoot, who was engaged in collaboration with Westcott and Hort himself on a similar undertaking at Cambridge.

The names of Jowett and Stanley are perhaps the most important in the Liberal or Broad Church movement of sixty years ago. Maurice, Kingsley, Robertson were, it would hardly be too much to say,

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“Broad” or “Liberal” rather against their will than otherwise. They did not, as I said, breathe easily in the atmosphere of Evangelical or Tractarian piety; but they claimed and desired to be as orthodox as either Evangelical or Tractarian; they were ready to treat the points in which Evangelical or Tractarian differed from themselves as points in which they were less orthodox. Jowett and Stanley, on the other hand, no doubt held, like other men, that their opinions were right as against the opinions which they rejected, and no doubt “orthodoxy” means etymologically no more than “right opinion.” But they were, as the others were not, deliberately Liberal; though, as they were men of very different intellectual temperaments, not quite on the same grounds. Jowett very early came to recognize, if less vividly than in his later life, that what mattered to himself in religion, while it could often be expressed in the familiar language of the Scripture, of the Prayer Book, or of popular devotion, could be expressed also, and perhaps more naturally to modern ears, in quite other language. He lived in a sphere apart from the controversies, doctrinal or ritual, which agitated the ecclesiastical world of his time; he did not feel himself involved or concerned in them at all; Archbishop

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Tait notes somewhere in a letter with a kind of wondering amusement his indifference to all such things. An acceptance *ex animo* of the formularies of the Church seemed to him so utterly impossible that his conscience appears to have been untroubled by doubts as to the propriety of his own conformity and performance of clerical duties. When summoned by the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford to reiterate his assent to the 39 articles, he made no difficulty about doing what was asked of him. He offered no explanation of his position, but, with the words "Give me a pen," he signed them without more ado. Such a man's theology was deliberately "Liberal" or "Broad" in the sense that it acknowledged no bounds which it could not pass. But, if Jowett may seem to some to have had little of the Anglican about him, I would remind you that he was true to the Anglican type in his devotion to Plato, the translation of whom was the chief literary work of his life; as also in his isolation from the theological activities of continental Churches, with which Stanley, it may be observed, loved to be in touch.

Stanley, though a close friend of Jowett and co-operating with him, as we saw, in his scheme for an edition of St. Paul's Epistles, was a man whose mind

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was cast in a very different mould. Not philosophical speculation but historical imagination played the chief part in forming his theology, and his theology was deliberately "Liberal" or "Broad" not so much because his own belief was very different from that of many of his fellow Churchmen, as because he was passionately desirous to exclude from religious fellowship as few as possible of those whose various modes of religious life his historical imagination led him to delight in picturing to himself and comparing with his own and with others with which he was acquainted. Thus Jowett's indifference to confessional distinctions and Stanley's vivid interest in them led them both to a position which may be called not merely negative, because neither High nor Low, but positively and deliberately "Broad." They stand as representatives of a Broad Church school which is sometimes said to be dead, but of which there are among Liberal or Modernist Churchmen to-day many who may be reckoned as the spiritual descendants.

During the earlier part of the half century which we are now engaged in considering, the dominant philosophy in England was that of the empirical school, whether as represented by John Stuart Mill, or as modified by the introduction of the conception

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of evolution, by Herbert Spencer. This philosophy, speaking generally, derived all knowledge from sensation; it treated the mind upon the whole as the passive recipient of impressions from an independent material world; and it adopted the point of view of what the historians of philosophy call Nominalism. It denied the reality of "Universals"—the objects of thought, that is to say, to which our general names refer—and regarded them not as independent features of the real world, but as mere abstractions which we frame by including under a common designation a number of individuals, in themselves wholly distinct from one another, by a certain resemblance among which we have been struck. It would be impossible now to show in detail what is nevertheless certainly true, that religion in general and Christianity in particular could scarcely find their account in a philosophy of this type, except by supplementing it with beliefs to which it could have nothing to say, and could merely suffer them as additions made on the authority of a revelation, itself attested by the evidence of miracles; and to the admission of such evidence the influence of this philosophy itself was bound to be hostile. In consequence the theological Liberalism of this period, in its atti-

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tude of receptiveness towards the ideas moving in the world around, was inevitably led in the direction of what has been called a "reduced Christianity." It could find, however, a firmer philosophical footing in Ethics. Here it could take its stand upon the ultimate and self-evidencing authority of Conscience, and introduce religion, after the fashion of which Kant had set the example, as supplying conceptions which are presupposed in the life of duty. There were some philosophical theologians ready to avail themselves still further of the help of Kant. Mansel, Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, and afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, propounded a view which, starting from one side of Kant's teaching, emphasized the incapacity of our intelligence to know things as they are in themselves, and denied the possibility of the knowledge of God in order to make room for faith. This doctrine, propounded in a well-known series of Bampton Lectures, was better received by High Church men than by Liberals, who were more jealous of the rights of reason in the matters of religion; and these Liberals' suspicions of the line of thought were eventually justified by the fact that the arguments of Mansel were reproduced by Herbert Spencer in his *First Principles* as the basis of what

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came to be called his "agnosticism," in which religion was reduced to the sense of mystery inseparable from the conviction that the true essence of reality is by the very nature of our thought for ever veiled from our ken.

But a new situation was created when a serious criticism of the current empiricism was undertaken by certain thinkers, of whom the most conspicuous was Thomas Hill Green of Balliol College, afterwards Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Oxford. It was Green's main contention that the British empirical school, to which, in spite of mutual divergences, the English thinkers most influential when he began to write—Mill, Spencer, Huxley—all alike belonged, and which believed itself to be carrying on the work of the great British thinkers Locke and Hume, had in fact never learned Hume's lesson. For, had they done so, they would never have believed that a sensationalist philosophy, which Hume had shewn once for all to be destructive of the possibility of any science whatsoever, since sensation alone cannot assure us of the existence of any permanent substance at all or of the reality of any relation of cause and effect which is more than an expectation on our part of the same sequence oc-

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curring as has occurred before, could render any support to the natural sciences, whose interests these thinkers—Mill, Spencer, Huxley, and the rest—had so much at heart. A mind which is no more than a succession of mutually independent sensations, a world in which only what is given in sensation can rank as fact, are not a mind which can know as the scientific man knows, a world which can be known as the world with which the scientific man deals is known. Relations, such as I mentioned above, of cause and effect cannot be treated by natural science as something added by the mind to the facts, yet they are undoubtedly, as Hume had shown, not given as sensations. Thus Green claimed for the mind that it is more than a passive sensibility, that it involves principles of combination or synthesis, whereby it constitutes out of sensations an experience, and eventually a science, of Nature.

And not only did Green thus assert that in the consciousness of Nature, which in its full development becomes the science of Nature, there is implied what he called a "Spiritual Principle," which cannot be explained, as a mere part of the nature of which it is conscious; he went on to contend further that, as "relations" are of the essence of the Nature

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which we know, and yet, in the language of Locke which he adopted, are "the work of the mind," Nature itself must depend upon a Spiritual Principle, such as we find involved in our knowledge of Nature. This Spiritual Principle, however, cannot be my mind or yours, or even the sum of individual minds such as yours and mine. You and I find Nature there before we, as individuals, come to know it. But it is, so Green holds, inexplicable except as the object of a self-distinguishing consciousness; of an eternal consciousness or divine mind, whereof individual minds, such as yours or mine, are, as he sometimes puts it, "vehicles," or, as he sometimes also puts it, "reproductions," and wherein are eternally realized all the capacities gradually realized in time by human minds—a mind which is eternally all that the human spirit is capable of becoming.

It is clear that a philosophy of this kind, whatever its difficulties, was one with which Christian theology could find points of contact in a way that it could not with the empiricism which Green criticized. The human spirit no mere product of non-human nature, but the vehicle of an eternal Spirit; and that proved by the consideration that there could

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be no nature apart from Spirit, so that the possible derivation of man's animal nature from lower forms of life made no difference; the work of the mind seen in our own thought, with its perception of the universal in the particular, no mere play of our thought on the outside of things, but the very activity which holds the world together; all this was welcome to men to whom it echoed old phrases about the eternal Word in whom all things consist, and about the image of God in which man was made, and seemed to make the Incarnation of God in man something of a piece with the whole process of our human life, in which our activities reproduce the eternal activities of the Spirit from which ours is derived. It is not surprising that it was to the members of that theological school whose tradition it was to lay stress on the doctrine of the Incarnation that this philosophy especially appealed—that is to members of the High Church school, the successors of the Tractarians. Accordingly we find that it was in a product of this school, the collection of essays published with the title of *Lux Mundi*, under the editorship of Charles Gore, a little over thirty years ago, that the influence of Green on Anglican theology was first manifest. Mark Pat-

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tison did not live to see the publication of *Lux Mundi*; but it had not escaped him that the rise of Green's philosophy to be the dominant factor in the philosophical teaching of Oxford instead of the philosophies of Mill and Spencer had given fresh encouragement to the theological school with which he was least in sympathy.

For more than a quarter of a century, he observes in his *Memoirs*, Mill and nominalistic views reigned in the schools. But gradually the clerical party rallied their forces, and since the Franco-German War have been advancing upon us with rapid strides. This great invasion of sacerdotalism has been accompanied by a new attempt to accredit an *a priori* logic.

He calls the teaching of Green an attempt to accredit an *a priori* logic because it denied that reasoning could be explained, as Mill had tried to explain it, as starting from impressions on the senses, without admitting the capacity of the mind to order these impressions according to principles which it discovers in itself.

What is curious, Pattison goes on to say, is that this new *a priori* metaphysic, whoever gave it shape in Germany, was imported into Oxford by a staunch Liberal, the late Professor Green. This anomaly

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can only be accounted for by a certain puzzle-headedness on the part of the Professor, who was removed from the scene before he had time to see how eagerly the Tories began to carry off his honey to their hives.

When Pattison speaks of Tories and Liberals, he is not thinking merely or chiefly of political parties. But he takes it for granted that political Toryism goes along with High Church views, and that views which would reflect, or, at any rate, not conflict with the empirical and nominalistic philosophy of Mill, and which would not lend themselves to theological manipulation, are to be expected of a sincere political Liberal, such as Green certainly was. Here, however, he was not a little out. The young High Church school represented by *Lux Mundi* was by no means Tory; and the most remarkable personality among the contributors to the volume and the one in closest touch with Green, Henry Scott Holland, was as essentially a Liberal through and through as his master Green or as any man could be. The old alliance of High Churchmanship with Toryism, which went back to the political and dynastic controversies of the seventeenth century and still subsisted at the time of the Oxford movement, though the anti-Erastianism characteristic of the

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Tractarians already presaged its dissolution, was now no more. I do not wish to pursue the subject, which concerns rather the politics than the theology of the Church of England; but it is germane to the subject of the theology of the Church of England to mention that, as the distinguished editor of *Lux Mundi* once pointed out to me, the younger High Church school stands in the succession of the Christian Socialists, of Maurice and Kingsley and Westcott, as well as in that of the Tractarians; and also that the High Churchman's stress on the Church's independence of the State has made it easy for High Churchmen to join in the new popular tendency (more popular than ever since the Great War) to deny that the State should be put in a class by itself, apart from all other corporations and communities, as the supreme claimant of the citizen's loyalty. The writings of the late Dr. Figgis had a considerable influence in promoting this tendency, of which the so-called Guild-Socialism of certain political theorists is an extreme expression.

But to return to Green. It is widely recognized now that the position of *personality* in Green's philosophy is ambiguous. While the conscious spiritual life of knowledge and will is by this philosophy

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raised to the supreme position in the universe, it is not so clear what place is assigned to the personal distinction between each one of us and all other vehicles of this spiritual life. What is most permanently valuable in that life—knowledge of truth, and will for the good—would seem to be just that in which all persons who know the truth and will the good are one; as though the differences of *personal* equation and *personal* interest were what, in the scientific and moral life respectively, we aimed at discounting and subordinating. Can we then regard our personal distinctness from one another as having ultimate or absolute value? And if each of our personally distinct minds is a vehicle or reproduction of the divine consciousness, can we attribute to God a personality of his own? These were questions to which it was doubtful precisely what answer Green (who was dead before his principal work was published) would have returned; and some of his ablest successors have answered both decidedly in the negative. It is not surprising then that philosophical Anglican theology has, since Green, been to a considerable extent occupied with the study of the conception of Personality and vindication of its importance. The names of Illingworth, Moberly,

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Richmond, Rashdall, Temple, occur to me among those of Anglican theologians who have illustrated this remark by their writings; and some or all of these have been much indebted in their discussions of this subject to one who was perhaps the last great figure in the long line of German systematic philosophers which begins with Kant, Hermann Lotze.

The isolation which was characteristic of Anglican theology is, I think, we may say, characteristic of it no more. Its response to the various influences which are moving in the world of thought around it—to Pragmatism, to the philosophies of Bergson and of Croce, to the theories implied in the methods of the psycho-analysts, to the revival of interest in mysticism—is almost too swift and self-conscious. But the other characteristic which I noted in my first lecture as belonging to it through the whole period, its Platonism, remains. It is not equally observable, of course, in all its representatives; but it is evident in many of them. It remains to be seen whether it will survive the recent retrogression of English higher education from the ideals of the Renaissance toward mediæval Greeklessness. But those who are apprehensive on this account may perhaps take comfort from the reflec-

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tion that the theology of the Middle Ages was more Platonic than it knew, despite their Greeklessness; and from the not quite unwarranted hope that, "compulsory Greek" having ceased to serve as a cockshy for would-be reformers, Greek may come to be sought after again (like lace, to quote Dr. Johnson's famous comparison) as something rare and precious, conferring on its possessor distinction among his fellows and a key to mysteries not otherwise to be enjoyed.

II

MORALITY AND RELIGION¹

1

MORALITY AND RELIGION DISTINGUISHED

IT was the method of Aristotle in approaching ethical problems to begin with a consideration of what was commonly said and thought about them by, as we say nowadays, the man in the street. He held and surely with reason, that from such popular notions there was much to be learned. As put by the man in the street himself, they very likely would not bear criticism: they might often contradict one another, yet they would not be entertained without having in them some measure of truth; and it was thus worth while to take them as indications which might guide us in the right direction and save us from missing relevant considerations; although at the end we

¹ Three Lectures delivered at King's College, London, under the auspices of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Oxford, in the Summer Session of 1920.

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might find that in our own conclusions they would only survive in a modified form.

If we apply this method, as we shall, I think, be well advised in applying it, to the question of the mutual relations of Religion and Morality, which is to engage our attention in these three Lectures, we shall find in the first place a view very prevalent among us that Religion apart from morally good conduct must be a mere hypocritical pretence and has no just claim to be called Religion at all; while, on the other hand, the existence of morally good conduct apart from Religion may be taken to show that Religion is only, at the most, of value in certain cases and not universally. Such a view suggests that Religion is something merely subsidiary to Morality, a means to Morality as the end, and a means which may be dispensed with where that end can be attained without it.

But, general as is this readiness to respect Morality apart from Religion and refusal to respect Religion apart from Morality, there is also discoverable, side by side therewith, among men who have no pretensions to be theologians or philosophers, a vein of thought and sentiment which would harmonize better with a theory assigning to Religion

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a considerably greater independence of Morality.

I dare say that many of us have lately been reading the exceedingly interesting and suggestive volume published under the title of *The Army and Religion*, by a committee of representatives of various religious bodies which met under the chairmanship of the present Bishop of Winchester, and the writing of whose report was entrusted to Dr. Cairns, of the United Free Church College at Aberdeen. We find here indeed fully recognized the prevalence in the British Army—which in the late War was in fact nothing less than the manhood of the nation in arms—of the notion that Religion is worthless apart from Morality, while Morality is by no means to be regarded as worthless apart from Religion. This is, indeed, nothing but what we should have expected.

The prevalence of this notion was quite as obvious among our people before the War as it could be in the British Expeditionary Force. But we also find Dr. Cairns and his colleagues calling our attention to another aspect of the ordinary Briton's view of the world which was, no doubt, developed and rendered more conscious by the circumstances of the War. It is thus described in an extract from a paper on

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“Trench Religion” by an officer of a Scottish Highland regiment, given at p. 163 of the book to which I am referring. “The Soldier’s God,” writes this officer, “is once more the God of battles who clothes himself with the storm. He is not the judge of righteousness and wrong, not the friend of the fatherless and the widow’s protector, not holy, or just, or good, but simply the controller of all the forces of Nature which burst from the little grasp of man; the Lord of Fate and the Master of Life and Death.” The interest of this passage in the present connection is that it testifies to a sense of the distinctness of the religious consciousness from the moral, just as the witness borne by observers of our soldiers in the late War, no less than by those of our countrymen generally, to the intimate association in their thoughts of Religion with Morality and its subordination, in their estimate of its value to Morality, testifies to the close connexion which we shall expect, if we share Aristotle’s respect for the *vox populi* in ethics, to find existing between the two.

It is this latter way of regarding their relation—the way which associates Religion with Morality and subordinates it to Morality—that finds expression in Matthew Arnold’s celebrated definition of Re-

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ligion as "Morality touched by emotion." This cannot indeed be regarded as a good definition from any point of view. It will be clear to anyone who attempts to apply it with any strictness that the emotion by which Morality must be "touched" to convert it into Religion is not *any* sort of emotion; nor can we suppose Matthew Arnold himself to have intended us to think that it is. It must be specially *religious* emotion; and thus the definition turns out to be really circular, as indeed I believe that every proposed definition of so fundamental and universal an activity of the human spirit as Religion must necessarily be; and no doubt Matthew Arnold knew very well in his own mind the kind of emotion which he meant when he framed this unconstructive definition (as I cannot but consider it) of what Religion is. But, whatever formal objection may be brought against Matthew Arnold's phrase considered as a formal definition of Religion, it is not only characteristic of its author, but exhibits him as typical of his and our countrymen. The thought which it expresses is the thought that the substance of Religion, so to speak, is Morality and Morality only; that it adds to Morality something which may indeed make it more attractive or charm-

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ing or exciting than it would be without it, but which nevertheless depends so much upon temperament and training that many are incapable of it, and is so much affected by circumstances and environment that it varies from time to time in the same individual; but without which Morality is none the worse, though it may be less pleasant; and is even perhaps more secure for not being associated with feelings and practices and beliefs so difficult to justify or explain as those connected with Religion.

Congenial, however, as this thought is to the British mind, it is inadequate as a conception of the nature of Religion. Neither the history of Religion in the past nor the facts about Religion as it now exists which may be gathered from a survey of the world as a whole, confirms it; as I shall attempt to show somewhat more at large later on. And, moreover, even where Religion is most closely connected with Morality—and this connection is closest in the Christian religion—it is, to those in whom the religious experience is deepest and the religious consciousness most vital, far more an experience and consciousness of that which underlies and supports Morality than an attraction added to Morality, the

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withdrawal of which would leave Morality intrinsically unchanged.

Religion is subordinated to Morality not only in Matthew Arnold's definition of Religion, but also in Kant's philosophy of it. The account of the nature of Religion which Kant gives us differs indeed from Matthew Arnold's in one important respect. Matthew Arnold did indeed, as we saw, find in Morality the essence, as we may call it, of Religion, but the emotion which he regarded Religion as adding to Morality was something which he very highly valued. This was natural in a poet; but Kant, who was not a poet, had something very like a horror of emotion. In his ethical theory he tends to regard the presence of any kind of emotion, except that of reverence for the law of Duty, as tarnishing the purity of a good action; and the encouragement of any specifically religious emotion he would have dreaded as bound to promote superstition and suggest the erroneous notion of a possible relation to God distinguishable from subjection to that moral Law whereof we picture him as the sovereign source.

Thus, while agreeing with Matthew Arnold in subordinating Religion to Morality, Kant would

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differ from him in not regarding it as the function of Religion to arouse an emotion which Morality, apart from Religion, would not evoke. The functions of Religion are, in Kant's view, two: that of supplying a public and external expression for the common resolution of many men to devote themselves to the performance of moral duty; and that of providing a symbolism for ideas which Morality seems to presuppose, but which cannot be verified in any possible experience.

The former function is the function of religious observance. Private religious observance Kant did not approve. He thought that a man would naturally be ashamed if caught upon his knees in prayer alone. He was indeed no stranger to the sentiment of Reverence, which the wisdom manifested in the order of nature and, still more, the Moral Law of Duty excited in his breast. But, even when directed to the Moral Law, the thought of this sentiment in him was at least equalled by that of the sense of the dignity of human nature, which shared in the autonomy of the Reason that uttered itself in the Moral Law itself. Or rather this source of the dignity of human nature was not in Kant's eyes a sentiment different from that of Reverence. It was Reverence itself,

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directed to the personality in which the supreme object of Reverence, the Moral Law, was immanent and actual. In public worship a certain attitude might be fitted to express to others this Reverence in which the congregation was met to encourage one another; but in private it could only suggest a personal intercourse with God which seemed to Kant illusory in itself and fraught with moral danger to anyone indulging in the illusion.

But it is not only religious observance which is thus wholly subordinated to Morality by Kant. Religious faith is only justified in his view by the imperative demand made by the Moral Law upon our conscience, a demand only comprehensible if the world be envisaged as ultimately under the government of God, and as affording the scope which only an immortal life can give for a perpetual approximation on our part to a fulfilment of his law. Neither God nor immortality can be objects of our *knowledge* in the sense to which Kant confined that term; for their reality cannot be verified in any possible experience under the forms of space and time—and the human spirit is capable of no other sort of experience—since it would contradict our thought of them to suppose them subject to the lim-

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itations either of space or of time. Nor, on the other hand, does the Moral Law depend—so Kant held—for its obligatory force upon the belief in God and immortality, so that anyone who disbelieved in these could reasonably refuse obedience to that Law. No; its authority was, as Butler had said, “manifest”; to ask for a reason why one should do one’s duty is to demand to make which is in itself to be undutiful. But, so long as we have within us the consciousness of the claim of Duty upon us, and yet see around us a world which seems to be ordered on principles which ignore this claim, we cannot but be plunged in a perplexity, from which the only escape lies in the faith which we call Religion—the faith that in the last resort this world, despite all appearances to the contrary, is under moral government. We must act in obedience to the Moral Law as though this were so; and this is precisely what we mean by “faith”—the holding something to be a sufficient ground for action, where we lack such proof as would constrain the understanding to accept it as certainly true.

Now, in describing, as in this summary fashion I have tried to describe, the theory put forward by Kant as to the relation of Religion to Morality, I

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am very far from wishing merely to criticise it as inadequate. In its emphasis upon the “manifest authority” of the Moral Law, the very nature of which is that it admits of no question of why or wherefore—I do not of course mean that I may not legitimately ask why this or that is my duty, but only that I may not legitimately ask why I should do my duty—in his emphasis upon this “manifest authority,” which does not allow of our seeking a sanction for our obedience to it in any divine threat of penalty or promise of reward; and again in its decided condemnation of any attempt to get, if I may so speak, into relation with God behind the back of the Moral Law or to engage his judgment in our favour by ceremonial observances or by the demonstration of pious feeling; it is to be regarded as a contribution of the first importance not only to the exposition of the nature of Morality but to the purification of Religion.

Nevertheless this teaching of Kant’s cannot be acquitted of very imperfectly recognising that, however close may be the connexion between Religion and Morality, and however much it may be in the interest of Religion to render this connexion as close as possible, yet there is in Religion something beside Mo-

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ality, which is distinct from Morality and independent of it. From a full appreciation of this Kant was held back partly by his tendency to deny the name of knowledge to any kind of apprehension which was not of the type illustrated by the mathematical and physical sciences, partly by the lack in his temperament of a capacity for that religious emotion which Matthew Arnold, despite the general resemblance of his theory of Religion to Kant's (as, like his, subordinating it to Morality), nevertheless regarded as the *differentia* of Religion.

It is noticeable that the neglect of this characteristic religious emotion, which is so remarkable in Kant, is shared by an exactly opposite and still more unsatisfactory account of the matter, which would subordinate not Religion to Morality but Morality to Religion. This is the account presupposed by the traditional procedure of our law courts, where an understanding of "the meaning of the oath" which invests an answer there given with religious sanctity is taken to consist in a conviction that perjury will be followed by punishment after death, inflicted by the God whose name has been taken in vain. Such an account is implied also in the doctrine of Paley that virtue is "the doing good

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to mankind in obedience to the will of God and for the sake of everlasting happiness." Morality is made here to rest upon an inference from a religious belief—yet a belief which is itself after all not truly religious, in so far as the specific religious emotion seems to play no part in it.

The views which have so far been considered, whether they make Religion subsidiary to Morality or Morality subsidiary to Religion, have alike failed to do justice to the peculiar characteristics of the religious consciousness. It is possible that variants of these two positions might be suggested, which might not be exposed to the precise criticisms which I have brought against those which I have described. But I am convinced that no view which does not recognise the distinctness and relative independence of Morality and Religion will be found in the long run to be satisfactory.

Whether we look at the matter from the point of view of history and experience, or from that of a philosophical consideration of the nature of these two forms of spiritual experience, we shall find ourselves compelled to recognise their mutual distinctness. To take the former point of view first, it is perhaps sufficient merely to note, without fur-

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ther insisting upon it, a fact so obvious as that the ethical and the religious temperaments are by no means always combined in the same individual. We may indeed express our sense that an irreligious Morality has less value than a religious, by calling it "mere Morality," or our sense that an unethical Religion has less value than an ethical by the use of some word, more or less disparaging, such as "religiosity"; but we cannot deny the evident distinctness of the temperaments which we should denominate as respectively "ethical" and "religious."

The history of mankind encourages us in the recognition of their distinctness. With respect to peoples of what is called "the lower culture," the study of whose ways is generally called (somewhat invidiously) by the name of Anthropology, I claim no right to speak with expert knowledge. I gather, however, that this mutual distinctness of Morality and Religion is easily traceable among primitive men. I would refer in support of this statement to Dr. Westermarck's book on *The Origin of the Moral Ideas*. This work is a great storehouse of facts regarding the prevalence of various kinds of conduct and the estimate in which they have been held at different times and in different places all over the

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world. I do not pretend to agree with all Dr. Westermarck's views; but he is a scholar of wide knowledge and of a sane judgment, and his conclusion, based upon a vast mass of evidence, is that Morality and Religion have, from the earliest stages of human development of which we can discover anything, run a distinct course, however much the one has at certain times and under certain conditions affected or influenced the latter.

The opinion of Dr. Westermarck is that the influence of Religion upon Morality is great "at certain stages of culture, which, though comparatively advanced, do not include the highest stage." The reason for the decline of this influence which he finds in the highest civilization he puts down to "the lessening of the sphere of the supernatural by the increase of knowledge and the assumption of a perfectly ethical character to the Godhead." It is easy to see that the latter circumstance would tend to make the religious element in conduct less obviously distinct from the moral. But it does not follow that it is a true interpretation of the phenomena to see it in a decrease of the influence of Religion on Morality. We may in the second and third Lectures find cause to regard the facts in a some-

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what different light from that in which they are viewed by Dr. Westermarck.

Not only do history and experience exhibit Morality and Religion as distinct; a consideration of the nature of these two forms of spiritual activity will confirm the evidence of observation. For, as has been already pointed out, when I was attempting to expound Kant's theory of their mutual relations, the outstanding feature of Morality is what Butler calls the "manifest authority" of Conscience (it would be better to say, of the Moral Law), and Kant describes as the autonomy of the good will, whereby we will to do our duty not with any ulterior motive in view, but just because it is our duty. Even to raise the question "Why should I do my duty?" is to contradict the very notion of duty. Any attempt to make Morality depend upon Religion which rests the obligation to do right upon what has often been called a "religious sanction"—on a command of God, obedience to which is enforced by promises or threats, rewards or punishments—as much violates the essential nature of Morality as the Utilitarian view which rests it upon the tendency of right action to produce pleasure; and indeed comes in the long run to the same thing.

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But, if this "manifest authority" of the Moral Law makes it necessary to distinguish Morality from Religion and impossible to subordinate it to Religion, as is done by systems which find in the arbitrary will of God, however revealed, the ultimate sanction of all duty; so on the other hand it is no less impossible to be satisfied with such a subordination of Religion to Morality as is exemplified in Matthew Arnold's definition of Religion and in Kant's philosophy of it. Religion is always a conscious relation or attempt to get into relation with what, however crudely imagined or conceived, is yet imagined or conceived as somehow containing in itself the mysterious power at the heart of things. It thus always involves at least an implicit view or theory of what, when reflection is sufficiently far advanced, is seen to be the world or life as a whole, and at last to be the Ultimate Reality or, as modern philosophers are apt to say, the Absolute. No doubt, like all forms of our spiritual activity, Morality itself is only possible to a being in whose heart (to use the language of Ecclesiastes) eternity has thus been set; in other words to a rational being. But, apart from Religion, it is not, in the same way as Religion, essentially a conscious relation to what is within or

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below or behind or above (we may use which metaphor we will) the "number of things" of which, as Stevenson's child-poem says, "the world is so full." We must then recognise the mutual distinctness of Morality and Religion but we must also recognise the intimacy of the relations which have throughout their history existed between them, an intimacy that has led some to confound them with one another.

We must observe that, though it is in Religion that man first consciously apprehends the Whole of which he and all that is about him form a part, and though for this reason Philosophy, normally in the race, and very often in the individual also, springs out of Religion, nevertheless it is characteristic of Religion—and this is why, to my thinking, Signor Croce is wrong in considering it destined to be absorbed into Philosophy—to apprehend this Whole merely as an object of knowledge but in a living personal relationship, which has historically been mediated and is commonly still mediated to men through the group to which they belong.

To use words which I have already used elsewhere, "only gradually have men come to realise that their immediate social environment is not the dominant fact in the universe. Only gradually has their

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consciousness of the world which at first was, as we may put it, mediated to them through the consciousness of their group, become the consciousness of a Reality which cannot be identified with even the most comprehension of human communities. But, as ever wider and wider horizons have opened to their view, the religious emotion which was from the first excited in the performance of those actions whereby men shared in the common life of their tribe has continued to attend their consciousness of the all-embracing Unity wherein they live and move and have their being.”²

Religion is thus social experience; and Morality, which in any case as the rule of conduct, must exclude conduct towards God, is also throughout social. Hobbes's theory of Morality is paradoxically expressed, is entangled in the mythology of the “social contract,” and lays itself open to the criticism that it makes Morality unnatural and, as it were, a second-best course, with which, if one could gratify one's inclinations unrestrained by it without incurring inconveniences from others' hostility outweighing the satisfactions we should gain for ourselves, one would not burden oneself. But the strength of his theory

² *God and Personality*, p. 218.

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lies in the emphasis laid in it upon the *social* character of Morality. Outside of society, or prior to the existence of society, the life of man must have been, as he said, "poor, nasty, brutish, solitary and short,"—in other words, not a human life at all, but a merely animal one.

Morality is throughout social; and even when, as I think is the case, conduct is directed to ends which do not find their full justification in their conduciveness to social welfare, to the pursuit of knowledge, the creation of beauty, the purification of the inner life, the goodness of these objects of human endeavour can be expressed in terms of social welfare, although it is clear that in some of their highest forms they contribute to that welfare only because of their intrinsic excellence, which makes a society the better for exhibiting them. They could not indeed attain to the highest level of excellence indeed except through a whole-hearted devotion to them on the part of their votaries which would be incompatible with keeping an eye upon their social ability as an end from which they were to be distinguished and to which they were merely instrumental.

Thus Religion and Morality have in common this involution with the social life of man. I have quoted

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Dr. Westermarck's judgment that it is not in the most primitive stages of human development that we find them most closely intertwined; yet from the first they are in relation to one another, both alike being features of man's social life. The tribal god is not necessarily supposed to be found by tribal custom; nor is the sanction for tribal custom necessarily sought in the command of the tribal god. Yet he may well be thought to be interested in it; he may even be considered as its guardian and its vindicator. It is a mark of religious progress that he should come to be so regarded. In proportion as he comes to be looked upon in this light, does a discrepancy between his supposed acts and the rules of tribal custom become a difficulty; and we have begun the process of the criticism of Religion by Morality, to which I propose to devote my second Lecture. It is by means of this criticism that Morality achieves the improvement of Religion; as in its turn we shall find (and this will be the topic of my third and last Lecture) Religion imparting to Morality an inspiration, without which Morality tends to harden into pedantry and formality.

2

RELIGION UNDER THE CRITICISM OF MORALITY

In my first Lecture I endeavoured to show that

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Religion and Morality must be distinguished from one another. I pointed out that a view of Religion as merely a kind of appendix to Morality, whether in the form suggested by Matthew Arnold's definition of it as "Morality touched by emotion" or in that exhibited in Kant's philosophy of Religion which, as set forth in his treatise upon *Religion within the limits of mere reason*, finds the whole meaning of religious doctrines in their relation to moral conduct, and justifies the belief in God only as a "postulate of the Practical Reason," that is of Morality, is not the view to which we shall be led either by an analysis of the religious consciousness or by a study of the past history and present phenomena of Religion. For the evidence of this study I appealed to Dr. Westermarck's *Origin of the Moral Ideas*. We found that the vast collection of facts accumulated by this scholar's industry went, in his own opinion, to show that the development of Morality goes on among primitive peoples independently on the whole of their religious beliefs. I do not think indeed that we shall find Dr. Westermarck at his best when he is dealing with the subject of Religion, nor shall we find in him an adequate statement of the significance either of the original mutual independence of Moral-

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ity and Religion or of their subsequent mutual action and reaction. But I think that the facts which he has collected do bear out what I think can be shown empirically in other ways.

The use, much affected on the other side of the Atlantic, of what is called a *questionnaire* for discovering people's religious thoughts and habits I am, I confess, disposed to regard with considerable suspicion. It may very likely happen that many of those, information about whom would be especially important, would be just those who would shrink the most from cross-examination on the subject by an inquisitive and dispassionate investigator, so that in a collection gathered by this means the testimony of the least delicate and reticent souls is apt to loom disproportionately large. But I think it is interesting to learn from the record of an enquiry of this kind conducted some years ago by a professor in the University of Wisconsin, Mr. Chapman Sharp, that an attempt to discover by interrogating a number of students not philosophically educated nor accustomed to reading about religion or philosophy, nor yet irreligiously brought up, tended to show that the so-called "religious sanction" of which our law courts require a recognition from a child before he can be

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put upon his oath, played but a very small part in their notions of morality.¹

We have seen indeed that Religion and Morality are alike social in their origin. Morality is at first the custom of the tribe, Religion at first the attitude of the tribe toward the mystery which encompasses human life. The breach of a tribal custom is the violation of a taboo or scruple of the kind whereof Mr. Salomon Reinach in his *Orpheus* has described Religion as an assemblage. It is natural to suppose that the tribal deity, though he may not be bound by tribal custom as the tribesmen are, is not altogether indifferent to it. Such considerations sufficiently indicate how impossible it was that Religion and Morality, distinct though they be, should not from the first affect one another and continue to do so, throughout the development of both until, as we shall see, men at last become convinced that God can do no evil and that nothing can be evil which God wills—and come to find in this the source of one of their greatest religious difficulties.

But, although there is thus a perpetual interaction between Religion and Morality, the religious senti-

¹ Cp. my *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, p. 260 n.

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ment and the moral sentiment are distinct from one another. In the early stages of their history both rest upon tribal custom. The view which has no doubt often obtained in modern times, and which naturally commends itself to minds trained in the traditions of European jurisprudence, that a binding law must be regarded as the enactment of a definite person or body of persons, to whom belongs the sovereign power in the community and therefore also the competence to change at will any part of this law, is neither a primitive nor a universal view. The Law is, on the contrary, more often regarded in earlier times as something which, so to say, runs of itself in the society and of which the rulers of the society are only the guardians and administrators. The difficulty which this manner of conceiving Law, common as it was both in antiquity and in the middle ages, is apt to present to legal theorists of a later time is partly due no doubt to a lack of historical knowledge and sympathy on their part, but partly also to the stronger sense of Personality which marks a more advanced stage of spiritual development. When the sense of Personality was weaker than it has since become, it was easier to think of the Law as binding upon us without there being any need to ask who was

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the law-giver. To a later age it might appear natural that, if not attributed to any human author, it must at least have been regarded as given by God. But this was not always so, though the higher the conception of God rose, the less easy did it become to evade the question of his relation to it.²

In the later stages of spiritual evolution the development of Morality by no means proceeds of necessity *pari passu* with that of Religion, although the two are continually interacting. Often it has happened that religious tradition has continued to consecrate usages which would anywhere but in the course of a religious service be counted, according to the improved ethical standard of the day, to be immoral. This we see abundantly illustrated in the antiquity of our own civilization by the writings alike of the Jewish prophets and of the Greek philosophers. Here Religion has lagged behind Morality. But on the other hand we all know that Christendom is full of cases in which the recognised Morality sanctioned by public opinion falls far below the standard officially acknowledged by the recognition of the life and teaching of Christ as being divine. Here Religion is the pioneer of Morality.

² Cp. *my Divine Personality and Human Life*, p. 139.

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In the present Lecture, which is to be devoted to the subject of the criticism of Religion by Morality, we shall be more concerned with the state of things illustrated by the former of these two examples: that in which Religion appears as a drag upon the progress of Morality, sanctioning in certain persons or on certain occasions conduct which would elsewhere or in others be reprobated as immoral. There are, I think, two features of Religion which bring about such a state of things: one is what may be described as its *conservatism*; the other I may call, for the moment, its *intimately personal character*.

I will deal with the former first. It would be a one-sided view of Religion, and of the part which it has played and still plays in human life, which should see in it, as is sometimes done, a merely conservative force. It is often on the contrary a revolutionary force. Indeed it might perhaps be argued that each of the two tendencies, the conservative and the progressive, upon the mutual tension of which the life of human society depends, appears in its most powerful form only when inspired by the religious sentiment. It is always characteristic of Religion to exhibit a negative relation (as one may say) towards

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what may be called the economic activity of the human spirit. This is that activity which the human spirit exerts in providing for the fundamental needs of our animal nature, not only in their primary and most simple forms, but as they are complicated and elaborated through the action of the intelligence upon them. Towards this activity the religious activity always stands in a negative relation, although the economic activity is at the same time always the presupposition and starting point of the religious activity itself, as of any other of the higher activities in which the human spirit expresses itself. Thus Religion postpones economic values to others less familiarly appreciated—"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness"—and in this way becomes a progressive and even revolutionary influence.⁸

On the other hand, Religion often maintains values with which the economic life has fallen out of touch. The sense of something sacred in what is ancient and established, which expresses itself in this religious conservatism, is perhaps the strongest of all the bonds which link the generations of men together in a conscious unity, and answers in the life of the

⁸ Cp. my *Divine Personality and Human Life*, Lecture II.

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community to the “natural piety” of which Wordsworth speaks as binding the days of manhood to those of childhood in the life of the individual.

But this conservatism of Religion seems bound to lead to a conflict between Religion and Morality. Men are slow to believe that the gods have ceased to require the services which they have been accustomed to render them, and slow to abandon their belief in or reverence for the stories which they have been accustomed to hear told of them, even when these services or these stories have altogether ceased to harmonize with the moral judgments which they would pass on conduct among themselves such as is traditionally ascribed to the gods, or on behaviour in secular life such as is required of the worshippers in the performance of a time-hallowed ritual. Classical literature is full of allusion to the sense of discrepancy between Religion and Morality thus aroused. It will be sufficient to recall certain outstanding examples. Plato will not suffer the young citizens of his ideal state to be educated even in the poetry of Homer, because of the representation therein of the gods as yielding to unworthy passions. Ovid in his *Fasti* tells the story of Numa bidden by Jupiter to sacrifice to him heads—“of onions,” says Numa—“of

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men," says the god. "Hairs," adds Numa—"the life," says Jupiter; "of a fish," adds Numa. And the god is represented as approving the pious king's ingenious and persistent evasion of a cruel order: *O uir conloquio non abigende deum*. "O mortal not unworthy to converse with gods!" The parallel is close with the story of the sacrifice of Isaac. In both narratives a later age reconciles Religion and Morality by explaining the apparent cruelty of the divine command as a trial, in the case of Abraham, of the worshipper's faith, in the case of Numa, of his humanity. Once more, St. Augustine has recorded in his *Confessions* his disapproval of the education in classical literature which he had himself received, because it familiarized those so brought up with poets who represented the chief of the gods as at once thunderer and adulterer, and reminds his readers of the passage in the *Eunuchus* of Terence, wherein a young man is introduced excusing himself for seduction by the example of Jupiter's amour with Danae.

One may indeed question whether a divine example under paganism ever meant what it would to us, just because in paganism the Platonic principle that God is good and that nothing but what is good is to be attributed to him has not been accepted as an axiom;

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but no doubt the persistence of traditions of this kind, even though the gods were not regarded as patterns of conduct, did not (to say the least) promote the progress of Morality; and it deprived the classical world of the powerful impulse given to that progress under Judaism and Christianity by the acceptance therein of the interpretation which the Jewish prophets had put upon the traditional language about the *holiness* of their national deity. Our familiarity with this interpretation makes it indeed hard for us now to realise that the primitive notion of God's separateness from common life did not originally involve what we should call *holiness* at all.⁴

Something more will have to be said of this persistence in religious tradition of a lower moral standard than has been elsewhere attained by the community which still regards this tradition with reverence, when I come to speak of the position assigned to Morality in Religion by Christianity. For the present, however, I pass to the other cause which I mentioned of the conflict sometimes observed between Religion and Morality, and which I de-

⁴ Cp. my *Problems in the Relation of God and Man*, pp. 262, 263.

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scribed as the intimately personal character of Religion. This description, however, requires some explanation or it may easily mislead us. For it may at first suggest features of the highest forms of Religion which cannot truly be said to belong to Religion at all throughout a great part of its history. The object of Religion is by no means everywhere and always regarded as personal, in the sense of being a Spirit capable of entering into what we should usually call personal relations with ourselves; nor yet is Religion everywhere and always regarded as an activity which is exercised by the individual man as an individual, distinguishing himself from his fellow members of the community to which he belongs. On the contrary, it is far more usual for Religion to be conceived as a function of the communal rather than of the individual life; and as concerning the individual man chiefly or only as a member of his group or community.

But, notwithstanding these facts, of which I am aware, and the importance of which I have no desire to minimize, the attitude of Religion is, I think, on the one hand never merely cognitive, merely one of apprehension or awareness, but implies at least the

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possibility of a relation of what may fairly be called a personal character with its object, although this object may not be explicitly concerned as another person or persons, and although, while the sense of a personal life in the individual, distinct from and at least possibly independent of the life of the community, is still undeveloped, so long the sentiment of an individual relation to the object of Religion, not mediated through the community, will also not have emerged into consciousness.

Now this intimately personal aspect of the religious life may give rise to a conflict between Morality and Religion and that, too, as a stage of religious development at which the danger to Morality from outworn religious tradition is no longer grave. For just because it is felt to be possible to have access to or communion with the Divine in a way which can be described in terms of personal intimacy, the thought may occur that in such access or communion we transcend the impersonal relation to the Moral Law, which is in Kantian phrase the same for all rational beings; and this whether the Divinity with which this more intimate relation is established be regarded as the Author of that Law or as belonging to a higher region "beyond good and evil" or even

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(as in that Manichean type of heresy which vexed the middle ages) as an independent Power of the same rank as the Author of the Moral Law. The warfare of the mediaeval Church of the West with this type of heresy was sometimes stained by cruelty and injustice; but in resisting it that Church was undoubtedly the champion of Morality in Religion. For, as we may learn from the stately rhetoric which Byron in his drama of *Cain* has put into the mouth of Lucifer, the imagination of an Evil Power, which is not the creature of the good God and not in the last resort destined to complete subjugation by him, involves the thought of a spiritual ambition for man distinct from that of union with the good God. It is thus expressly at variance with any religion which could be treated after Kant's fashion as a postulate of Morality, guaranteeing its ultimate supremacy in the universe, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.

But, even where Religion does not take this form, but acknowledges only one Supreme Power, and that a Power identified with the Law revealed in conscience, even there the sentiment of personal intimacy may suggest the possibility of some such private privilege of indulgence as a kinsman or favour-

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ite might obtain at the hands of an earthly king or magistrate. Polytheism, even where it is not of the Manichean type which sets side by side with the good God a rival Power of opposite character, but merely imagines a single hierarchy of divine beings under one supreme chief, affords special facilities for this kind of attempt to enlist religious devotion on the side of a lower moral standard.

Here again we must recognise that the mediaeval Church, while, in its popular devotion to a multitude of saints, its Christianity sometimes wears a very polytheistic air, yet never permitted the ascription of God-head to any saint, not even to the "Mother of God." I will refer my readers to the profoundly interesting contrast instituted by the late Sir Alfred Lyall in his *Asiatic Studies* between the unification of European religious cults by Christianity and that of Indian religious cults by Brahmanism. They will there find explained the extreme importance, not only in the religious but also in the political development of two civilizations, of what at first seems to be the merely formal difference that the lesser supernatural beings whom mediæval Christians honoured with religious ceremonies were denied by the Church the title of Gods,

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while those venerated by the Hindoo were allowed it, although only as forms or manifestations or incarnations of the supreme Brahmanic deities or of a single Divine Power whereof even Brahma, Vishnu and Shia are but appearances.

It cannot indeed be denied that, despite the refusal of the Christian Church to give the name of gods to the saints, whom notwithstanding it has permitted Christians to honour much as inferior gods were honoured under other religious systems, the dangers from which this refusal was able to secure Christianity were not entirely escaped. It is only necessary to refer to the tendency expressed in some well-known legends, some familiar artistic representations, and the language of much popular Roman Catholic piety, in which it is suggested that resort to Mary's intercession is likely to be more easily won because she, as a woman, may be supposed to have a less strict sense of justice and a greater susceptibility to the influence of private favour and affection. Such a view is of course wholly without sanction in the authoritative theology of the Roman Catholic Church, and it would not be impossible to find in branches of the Christian Church which do not invoke the intercession of saints a contrast sometimes

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drawn between the gracious Son and the stern Father which, although entirely inconsistent with the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, perverts that doctrine into a kind of ditheism, entailing a discrepancy between Religion and Morality such as is apt to follow on any loosening of grip upon the principle of the first commandment of the Hebrew decalogue.

It was the dread of the perversion of Religion after some such fashion as this into an influence injurious to Morality by means of the imagination of a possible access to God behind the back—to use an expression which I ventured to employ before—of the Moral Law—that was, I think, the principal motive of Kant's rejection as superstitious of all belief in an intercourse with God concerning which we could use the language appropriate to our intercourse with our fellow-men. He thought, however, that the doctrines of Christianity could be stated in a way which would avoid exposing it to dangers of this sort and would enable it to serve as a symbol to the imagination of a pure universal morality and to render possible the expression of such a morality in acts of public worship. Certainly if this could be accomplished by any of the great historical religions, we should expect Christianity to be that one. Yet

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it is obvious, not only that it has often in fact (as we have already seen in certain instances) been held to sanction practices which Kant would have thought superstitious, but that there are features which may well seem essential to any form of Christianity (especially the peculiar position ascribed to its Founder) which might appear to necessitate the recognition of what Kant would call a "statutory element" in its teaching. Moreover the central doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins, although it is true that Kant was prepared to supply an interpretation of it which should be in accordance with his own views, inevitably presents a difficulty to anyone who would assert that a moral rigorism is the be-all and end-all of Religion.

Now historical Christianity is the heir both of the Jewish prophets and of the Greek philosophers. In the Jewish prophets and the Greek philosophers we have two groups of men who performed the task of purifying and elevating the conception of God entertained by the Israelites and the Greeks respectively, that is by the two nations in whose religious thought the theology of Christendom is rooted. There was, however, one remarkable difference between the two groups which has a great importance

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for the understanding of our present subject. The Greek philosophers, in developing their own views of God, did not so much purify the traditional religious usages of their people as rose out of it and above it. The usages themselves they left on the whole much where they found them. Even Plato, who on occasion speaks with severity comparable to that of a Jewish prophet about some of the baser religious practices of his time, on the whole treats popular religion with a half-respectful, half-ironical tolerance. In the legislation of his ideal State he lays it down that his young citizens are not to hear unseemly tales; but he observes that, if any such *must* be told in any religious service, it would at any rate be well that the victim appointed to be occupied on such an occasion should be as expensive and as difficult to procure as possible.⁵ The assumption here that it is from religious worship that obscenity will be most difficult to dislodge at first strikes any one bred in Christian traditions as paradoxically strange; but the situation has of course a close parallel in India to-day.

The Jewish prophets on the other hand accomplished a task which the Greek philosophers were

⁵ Cp. *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, p. 209.

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unable to accomplish and which indeed they can scarcely be said to have attempted; and no doubt it was partly owing to their inferiority to the Greek philosophers in speculative insight that they were better able to accomplish it. This was the task of purifying their theology without losing touch with their national religious tradition. Speaking in the name of their national God, whose "holiness" they interpreted in an ethical sense, they achieved a reformation of the national worship which left it free from the sensuality which has haunted the precincts of so many heathen shrines, and facilitated the interpretation of them as symbols of an inward and spiritual worship which, after the Dispersion had rendered access to the place where they could be properly performed impossible to the majority of the nation, became more familiar to the most part of it than the sacrificial ritual itself.

Christianity inherited from the prophets their ethical interpretation of the holiness ascribed to the God of Israel and of the sacrificial language employed by religious tradition; and, after it had made for itself a home among the Gentiles, it inherited also from Plato his canon of theology that nothing but what is good may be ascribed to God.

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Now, as we have seen, the results of the establishment of this canon of theology, epoch-making as was its enunciation by Plato, were little felt in the religion of Plato's own countrymen before their adoption of Christianity, because the philosophical reform of theology did not, generally speaking, extend to the religious institutions of the people. Indeed, although in the Greek philosophical schools, especially in the Platonic and the Stoic, a very high ethical teaching was to be found, yet there remained even in these a certain discrepancy between theology and ethics owing to the fact that their doctrine of God was reached primarily by means of contemplation of and reflexion upon the order of the world, and not by way of an experience of a covenant-relation with him, as in the theology of Israel.

The history of Religion demonstrates the difficulty of founding a satisfactory religious ethical system upon a religion which is primarily cosmological; although religions which adopt a fundamentally negative attitude toward the world, like Buddhism, can form the basis of a lofty morality, though one which is essentially pessimistic. The Christian morality, which finds its ideal in a victorious life of filial love is based upon a religion whose God was

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known from the first primarily as the covenant God of Israel and only secondarily as the Maker of Heaven and Earth. It is in Christianity that the Platonic canon of theology has been so fully adopted that men whose religious training has been Christian are apt to miss its importance and to regard it as little more than tautological. Yet it is in fact only when it is accepted as an axiom that the really grave difficulties about the relation between Morality and Religion begin to be felt. For now the discrepancies which even Plato despaired of removing are regarded as inadmissible; and the appearance of such whether in the religious tradition or in the religious temper must be met either by an abandonment of the religious doctrines, practices or feelings which are morally condemned or by an endeavour to supply a moral justification of such doctrines, practices and feelings as may at first sight appear to lack it.

In Christianity, just because of the whole-hearted adoption therein of the prophetic principle of the divine holiness and of the Platonic axiom that nothing but what is good may be attributed to God, these difficulties will be found especially prominent; but I have only space to indicate very briefly some of the more important topics which would come up for

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discussion in any thorough-going treatment of the subject.

Under Christianity the criticism of Religion by Morality has no doubt gone on actively throughout its history; but it has for the most part been carried on in the name of Religion itself. This is especially obvious in the history of the Reformation. Indeed while here the forces of religious conservatism were on one side, the criticism—although to a great extent inspired by an ethical movement towards the unification of the moral ideal, which seemed to have suffered disruption owing to the recognition of the technically “religious” life and of celibacy as higher than the life of the married citizen and householder, notwithstanding that this was acknowledged to be legitimate and Christian—was nevertheless so definitely and consciously based upon religious dogma that the religious conservatives could be regarded without absurdity as in some respects the defenders of a merely natural or heathen Morality against the claims of Divine Grace to over-ride all rules and to annihilate all merit.

Again, in what will perhaps be eventually considered the most revolutionary change which has in quite recent times passed over the mind of western

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Christendom—the gradual abandonment of the doctrine of the inerrancy of Scripture—the moral conscience of Christians, emancipated by the advance of biblical criticism, has indeed thrown itself into the criticism of a great part of Christian religious tradition; but even here has drawn much of its inspiration in doing so from what has always been acknowledged as the most sacred part of that tradition, the teaching of Jesus Christ himself.

In respect to another remarkable change, associated with this, which has passed over the spirit of a large part of Christendom at the same time, and in the record of which in this country a memorable episode in the history of this College⁶ will always find a place, the change expressed by the widespread abandonment of the doctrine of eternal punishment as that was almost universally held and taught by Christian theologians in the past; although it may be claimed for this change that it is agreeable to the temper of forgiving love which the Church has learned from the Gospels, yet it can certainly not appeal to the recorded words of Christ in its favour. And hence it undoubtedly raises the question whether

⁶ King's College, London. The allusion is to Frederick Denison Maurice.

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there is in Christianity anything which can be withdrawn from the criticism of the moral conscience.

It would indeed be quite contrary to the whole spirit of Christianity that anything should be so withdrawn as in truth transcending the distinction of good and evil, still more as belonging to a "reserve," so to say, in which the morally evil could be permitted to dwell undisturbed by the censure of the Moral Law.

But it might be held that certain things were exempt from *our* criticism, that we must accept them as being good, however little they may seem to approve themselves to our conscience, because they come to us with an authority which guarantees their goodness. Now, if nothing more were meant by this than that we should show with respect to what is recommended to our acceptance by the persons or the societies to whose instructions the race owes its highest ethical ideals the same prudent modesty which makes us in ordinary life ready to submit our own judgment on a point of conscience to a friend whom we have every reason to think better and wiser than ourselves, we could only concur in the statement. But if it be meant that we should deny that to be good or evil which, after our utmost pains

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to see it clearly and steadily, presents itself to us as the opposite, though it be in Bible or in Creed or in the recorded teaching of Christ himself, I am convinced that we should be untrue to the spirit of the Christian religion itself. Christ is nowhere represented as withdrawing his teaching from the scrutiny of his hearers' consciences, but rather as submitting it to the judgment of them; and in the passage about the eternal sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost he is related to have pronounced the severest possible censure upon any such tampering with our moral convictions from prejudice in favour of religious use and wont as is likely to be the outcome of the temper which refuses the task of passing a personal judgment upon a clear moral issue, and, where such an issue is raised, is content to label a thing good or evil merely according to the source from which it comes.

I think it was Hurrell Froude—it was at any rate some enthusiastic young Tractarian in the early days of the Oxford movement—who said in conversation to a friend that every word of our Lord was as it were a canon law for the Church. I feel sure that the manner of treating those words implied in this remark is an entirely mistaken one, and quite uncongenial to the whole method and form of the teaching

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of Jesus. As a matter of fact, the Christian Church has never thus treated the majority of his sayings. That concerning divorce has indeed sometimes been regarded in this light; the words used in the institution of the Eucharist have been anxiously examined as a lawyer scrutinizes an Act of Parliament. But, for the most part, some of the sayings of Jesus have been treated as "counsels of perfection," others as "precepts," some as figurative, others as literal, in accord with the general judgment of the Christian community, which claimed from the time of the Fourth Evangelist onwards to enjoy the guidance of the Spirit of truth in its interpretation of the teaching of the Lord.

But while the moral conscience—a conscience trained, it is true, in the school of Christ—may, as we saw in the case of the doctrine of future punishment, come to miss in his recorded utterances a recognition of values which have now emerged into the general consciousness, (and, after all, as much may be said and has been said by theologians reckoned most orthodox, about conceptions which play a great part in the dogmatic system of historical Christianity, but are either absent from or quite unemphasized in the teaching ascribed to our Lord in the Synoptic

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Gospels) ; while there is in this respect a sphere even in Christianity as in all historical religions, for a criticism of religious tradition by Morality, there is in Christianity a feature, the criticism of which by Morality gives rise to a profounder problem than any due to the discrepancy with moral standards of such portions of the religious traditions as I have hitherto mentioned. For in this feature we have on the one hand something so essential to Christianity that the utmost freedom of discrimination, the most drastic modification of the Christian tradition could not neglect or remove it without destroying the religion itself ; something which is central alike in the Gospels and in the Epistles, in ancient times and in modern, in Catholicism and in Protestantism ; I mean the doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins.

One may find claimants of the Christian name—and some claimants to whom it is hard to refuse it—who reject the doctrine of the Trinity or that of the Incarnation or that of the Atonement by the death of Christ or the use of the Sacraments or the authority of the Church or of the Bible ; but probably none who would disclaim the doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins. Yet the doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins

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is one which presents not a little difficulty from the point of view of a strict ethical theory.

For it is at first sight a paradox that the Christian religion seems at once to intensify the horror of sin and yet to give assurance of forgiveness. From a point of view which we may call merely ethical, the religious horror of sin seems morbid, and the religious assurance of sin immoral: and moreover the two seem naturally inconsistent. One is inclined to say "Let us do better for the future and let bygones be bygones," but on the other hand to think that the effects of sin endure always and that we can depend on none but ourselves for the undoing of them.

It is true that the religious horror of sin would be morbid apart from the religious assurance of forgiveness, and the religious assurance of forgiveness apart from the religious horror of sin, and that the two are inconsistent in the sense in which so long as one remains at a certain point of view, the thesis and antithesis of the Kantian autonomies are inconsistent. The solution suggested by Christianity in the present case is that while man apart from God can do nothing, in union with God he can do all things; and although, as I said, the Forgiveness of Sins proclaimed by Jesus may be believed in and accepted

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where no doctrine of the Atonement is formulated, yet it is the essential significance of the language which has been most commonly held in the Church upon this subject that it represents the undoing of sin as accomplished by the union of God with man; since man cannot effect it without God, but God in man can do it.⁷

The mention of this difference of the attitude toward sin taken up by Morality apart from Religion and by Morality when inspired by Religion—an attitude which by those who have once adopted it, can scarcely but be regarded as even *ethically* more satisfactory, will form a natural transition to the subject of my concluding Lecture, in which I propose to deal with Morality under the inspiration of Religion.

3

RELIGION UNDER THE INSPIRATION OF MORALITY

In my second lecture I dealt with the criticism of Religion by Morality; and under that head considered both the examination, in the light of moral standards acquired at a later stage of religious development, of the actual traditions in a tenacious reten-

⁷ Cp. *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, p. 276.

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tion of which the conservatism characteristic of Religion is exhibited; and also, though less fully, the criticism, philosophically more important, of religious ideas from a point of view which may be described as *merely ethical*.

This latter kind of criticism was illustrated at the end of the Lecture, by the charge which may be brought from such a point of view against the central Christian doctrine of the Forgiveness of Sins as implying a morbid horror of sin coupled with an immoral readiness to shut one's eyes to its necessary and inevitable consequences; an ill-assorted pair of yoke-fellows and neither of them, though for different and even opposite reasons, deserving of much credit or respect.

This illustration, however, does no more than indicate by means of an example what I mean by a *merely ethical* point of view; and it will be desirable before going further to give a somewhat fuller account of what is in my mind when employing this expression.

It is characteristic of Morality that it deals with what *ought to be* and not at all with what *is*. Whether anyone ever does his duty or no, his duty it remains. The law may "conclude all under sin" as falling

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short of its demand; but the demand itself is not weakened thereby. Again, it is characteristic of Morality that it has no respect of persons; like Zeus in the *Odyssey*, it does not pity man; hence, as we saw in the last Lecture, the notion of *forgiveness* presents it with a difficult problem. Even in commanding works of beneficence, it does not, for it cannot, command the corresponding feelings; indeed, from a *merely ethical* point of view, such as Kant is apt to take, there is something more purely dutiful in the beneficence of one who does good to others without the inducement of an emotion of kindness towards the objects of his bounty and without the encouragement enjoyed by those who are conscious of a "glow of benevolence" in the performance of charitable deeds. Once more, the authority which the "merely" moral man reverences and obeys is envisaged as that of an abstract and impersonal Law; and, as we saw illustrated by the attitude of Kant, the representation of this Law as enacted by a personal Legislator, even where its power over the imagination is acknowledged and its practical value conceded, is regarded with some suspicion as endangering the purity of our respect for the Law itself, and

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at least suggesting the possibility of evading its requirements by means of an appeal to personal feeling.

It is, on the other hand, the characteristic feature of Religion by which it is contrasted with a non-religious Morality that it tends to impart to our respect for the Moral Law the "warmth and intimacy" which belongs to the mutual intercourse of persons and, especially in the Christian Religion, to transform that respect into a sentiment of love for its Divine Author. With this feature of Religion is closely associated the thought of a Providence which does not regard the individual merely as a particular instance of a universal but as *this* individual, "the very hairs of" whose "head are all numbered"; and also the thought of the possibility of a Forgiveness of Sins which, however, just because of the genuine individuality of its application, is not a mere waiving of the universal demand. Lastly, as was hinted in the few remarks made upon this subject at the end of my second Lecture, this again involves the notion of a realization in God of our ideal of what ought to be; which thus we can say not only *ought to be*, but in truth *is*.

We shall, I think, find that the association of Religion with Morality may be to the latter either a

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savour of death unto death, or a savour of life unto life. If Morality is not permitted by this association to develop itself upon its own lines, and to exercise such a criticism of Religion as was illustrated in my second Lecture, the connexion with Religion may degrade it, by checking its natural growth and constraining it to give the lie to its own intuitions in order to reconcile them to religious tradition. On the other hand, when Morality is allowed to develop itself in comparative independence of religious tradition, and to criticize that tradition freely, then the influence upon it of association with Religion will be to deliver it from meticulous anxiety by imparting to it the inspiration of an assurance that victory is within its grasp; from a pedantic rigorism by the substitution, as the object of its reverence, of a living Spirit for an abstract Law; and from an ungracious pride by the revelation to the soul, in the experience which we call Conscience, of a personal relation to the Authority manifest to us therein.

I will endeavour in the rest of this Lecture to illustrate in some detail this transfiguration of Morality by Religion, while pointing out by the way of contrast the danger of degradation involved for Morality in the union which may thus be fruitful for good,

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wherever Morality is not allowed to develop itself along its own lines and to carry on an independent criticism of the distinct but allied form of spiritual experience to which we give the name of Religion.

The religious view of wrong-doing as sin, while it may seem to heighten, and does indeed actually heighten, the sense of its gravity, may yet lead, and has actually led, to immoral results by treating it as an offence to be wiped out rather by expiatory ceremonies than by amendment of life, and by rating the non-observance of supposed ritual duties toward divine Powers as more serious than the violation of the rights of our human neighbours.

Where this happens, the nature of sin as a voluntary and personal act and that of punishment and of forgiveness as alike voluntary and personal experiences is not realized or is lost sight of. Oedipus is none the less guilty of parricide and incest that he neither knew Laius to be his father nor knew Jocasta to be his mother. Punishment is regarded as none the less truly punishment that there is no consciousness of guilt to meet it; a propitiatory sacrifice or other such rite can take away sin without repentance on the sinner's part. I suppose that it is against such an unethical although religious conception of sin,

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punishment, and forgiveness—a conception to which he stood historically nearer than we—that Plato was protesting in his affirmation that the end of punishment is to make the punished person better. I do not think that he thought of punishment in the main as a means to the reformation of a sinner, to which some other means of a quite different nature might on other occasions be preferred. The reformation that is to be effected by punishment presupposes the recognition of punishment as retribution, and can only be conceived as effected either by punishment or by some experience which takes up punishment into itself, as true forgiveness may; of this, however, I shall speak later on.

As Morality advances, the view of sin which Plato thus implicitly rejects is left behind, and at the same time the application of the Platonic canon of theology, to which I have so often referred, which forbids the attribution to God of aught but what is good, constrains us to regard the “manifest authority” of the law which bids us do good to our neighbours as a truer expression of the Divine Will than any commandment of a ritual nature.

But, when the criticism of Morality by Religion has done its perfect work, Morality will yet be found

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to need the inspiration of Religion to impart to its attitude towards the voluntary refusal of the good and choice of the evil, that depth and earnestness which attaches to the religious attitude towards sin; and also to inspire its strivings toward the ideal with the hope and confidence which can only come from the consciousness in Religion of intercourse with a real Supreme Goodness, in which the values we are endeavouring to attain are actually secure.

Again, from the point of view of Morality apart from Religion it is possible to suspect Religion, in the stress which it lays upon repentance, of insensibility to the lasting effects of wrong-doing, especially to those entailed by the operation of physical laws, which is unaffected by a change of sentiment in the wrong-doer. The murderer's regret will not revive his victim, nor will the remorse of the sinner whose selfishness has brought injury or disease upon others check the development of the disastrous processes which have thus been initiated. Here we may note again that, as I pointed out in passing in my second Lecture, Religion is criticized as guilty of the opposite error to that imputed to it before in respect of sin. The religious horror of sin seemed to make too much of sin; the religious call for repentance and

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faith that repentance wins forgiveness seem to make too little.

What we must here bear in mind is that it is not anything that may be called Repentance nor anything that may be called Forgiveness that Religion can accept as such. The thought that one may do evil with the intention of repenting and so earning forgiveness is incompatible, not perhaps with an uncomfortable feeling which we might be willing to put up with (as one may sometimes deliberately think it worth while to incur a fine), but certainly with a genuine repentance which can be recognized as drawing forgiveness after it. Should such a genuine repentance actually ensue in the case of sin so committed, it would have to include repentance for this very attitude assumed in the commission of the sin itself.

So, too, with Forgiveness. The man who has basely betrayed his friend will not be satisfied if the friend forgives him carelessly, as he might waive aside some trivial neglect which he had not noticed and did not mind. Such forgiveness would not have the moral value of punishment, would not have "taken up the punishment into itself," to use the phraseology of a certain philosophical school. The

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forgiveness which can dispense with punishment without an affront to Morality must be a forgiveness which in the acceptance of it by the person forgiven does the office of punishment—which, not through the intention of the party forgiving, but through the awakened conscience of him who receives the forgiveness, “heaps coals of fire” upon the latter’s head.

No one who reads the Parable of the Prodigal Son, in which the free forgiveness which runs to meet repentance is so wonderfully portrayed, imagines the father in the story as like one of the old men in Terentian comedy who, remembering his own youthful peccadilloes and finding that the situation can be regularized, opens his heart and his purse, and is greeted by a relieved but quite unrepentant son with an *O lepidissime pater!*

And it must also be remembered that it is not involved in the doctrine of the forgiveness of every true penitent that those consequences of sin, the inevitableness of which is insisted upon by critics of the doctrine, are abolished by forgiveness. On the contrary, the penitent and forgiven man must bear them; but he bears them in another spirit than that of the man who is impenitent and therefore unforgiven. This is no doubt what is symbolized in the

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representation of the souls in Purgatory who, because they are secure of salvation, can pass “without a sob or a resistance”¹ into the depths of the penal waters. No doubt in the eyes of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, the belief in Purgatory was not only intertwined with superstitious practices and with the traffic in masses for the dead, but seemed incongruous with the fulness of the divine pardon promised to the sincerely penitent; yet in itself it does, I think, express a true insight into the relation of divine forgiveness, even when conceived of as not only full but final, to the consequences which are entailed upon sin by natural law.

In the Parable of the Prodigal Son, wherein, as we saw, the doctrine of the full forgiveness of every true penitent is set forth with unequalled force and charm, the reconciliation of the *Justice* which is the last word of Morality apart from Religion with the *Mercy* by means of which it is apt to suspect Religion of betraying its stronghold, is brought home in the words spoken by the father in answer to the remonstrances of his elder son, “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.” There is here an

¹ Newman, *Dream of Gerontius*.

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ungrudging recognition of the just claims of obedience to law. But "it was *meet* that we should make merry and rejoice"; the very mercy which seemed at first to transgress rather than to transcend the law of justice is seen to be itself the truly just.

Up to this point we have been for the most part considering Religion as, so to say, on its defence against the criticism of Morality, and, while admitting the justice of some of this criticism and the value of it to Religion itself as a means to its purification and elevation, have claimed on behalf of Religion that, in its higher forms, it actually supplies to Morality an inspiration which it would otherwise lack, and thus assists it to escape from an abstractness and formality into which without that inspiration it would be in danger of lapsing.

But it is possible to claim for Religion that if it lifts us into a region "beyond good and evil" as Morality distinguishes these. Incongruous as such a view of Religion may be with the tradition of Christian theology, rooted as that theology is in the prophetic proclamation of God's righteousness and holiness, and in Platonism with its axiom that only what is good may be attributed to him, the suggestion of it is too closely connected with what I take to be

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essential features of the religious consciousness to justify us in lightly dismissing it as extravagant or meaningless.

Such a claim on behalf of Religion to be regarded as "beyond good and evil" may be made from several different points of view. But there is probably always present in it or behind it the conviction that the object of Religion must be the ultimate Reality, and the desire to see in all that finds place in our experience an expression of the thought and will of God. This conviction is of course challenged by doctrines, such as have of late found favour in very various quarters, of a "finite God."

These doctrines frankly surrender the attempt to regard God as, even at last, truly "all in all," and set him against the background of a Necessity, to which, like the Zeus of the ancient Greeks, he is himself subject, and over against evils which he combats and only imperfectly succeeds in subjugating. I have elsewhere² attempted an examination of this type of view, and do not propose to offer here any detailed consideration of it in its various forms. I will only say that it seems to me to sacrifice in the supposed interest of Morality an essential feature of

² *God and Personality*, Lecture VI.

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Religion, with which it cannot, I am convinced, despite all the eloquence of Mr. Wells, the moral and intellectual force and earnestness of Dean Rashdall, and the metaphysical subtlety of Mr. Bradley, dispense in the last resort; namely the faith that it has to do with nothing less than the supreme and ultimate Reality, which is (if I may so express it) at the back of everything. It is, as has often been observed, highly significant that Christianity, which of all historical religions has, as we saw, most wholeheartedly accepted the Platonic axiom and the prophetic doctrine of the divine holiness, and has enshrined Morality at the very heart of the religious life, has yet expressed what is perhaps its deepest thought in the famous hymn sung in the service for the blessing of the Paschal candle:

*O felix culpa quae talem at tantum meruit habere
Redemptorem.*

Let me quote by the side of this celebrated verse words from a modern Christian writer of unquestioned orthodoxy, the founder of the Society of St. John the Evangelist at Cowley, Richard Meux Benson: "God did not create the world by a mistake. People are often ready to think that after all it was

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a mistake, a misfortune; so that if God had really known all from the beginning he would not have incurred the misery which belongs to creation, he would not have allowed such circumstances to arise as would make the Passion necessary. We must reject all such dreams as blasphemous. God does not merely get out of evil by a wonderful device, leaving the evil as a thing that had better not have been. God comes to triumph over evil and therefore we must regard it not merely as antagonistic to God, but as subservient to him.”³

So far this writer. I quote him here, as I quoted the Holy Saturday hymn, as a witness to the fact that Christian piety does not shrink from a consequence, involved, as I venture to think, in the very nature of the religious consciousness, even though it seems, in embracing it, to run the risk of violating the Platonic axiom that we are not to attribute to God anything but what is good, and of undoing, by the assertion that Religion is beyond good and evil, that work of moralizing Religion for which Christianity has stood and which some modern critics of Christianity would censure it not for undertaking

³ *Spiritual Readings for Advent*, pp. 235, 236. Cp. my *God and Personality*, pp. 195, 196.

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but for failing to carry out with sufficient thoroughness.

I should not be dealing honestly with the problem thus raised if I did not frankly allow that we must not look either by a recognition of the implication of the possibility of moral evil in the reality of moral freedom or by a religious faith in God's ultimate supremacy—and I do not mean by this merely his *final* victory—to escape from our sense of dissatisfaction in the presence of moral evil. To escape from this source of dissatisfaction would not be to solve the problem of evil but only to forget or ignore its existence. It is indeed, I think, because moralists—such as Dean Rashdall—are keenly alive, and rightly and reasonably so, to the temptation to which those are subject who wholeheartedly accept the doctrine of God's ultimate supremacy—call it, if you will, his “omnipotence,” but in the historical sense which that word bears in the Creeds, not in the merely etymological sense which it is sometimes supposed to bear there, and is attacked accordingly—the temptation to allow their conviction of God's ultimate supremacy to weaken their dissatisfaction in the presence of moral evil, that they are in their turn tempted to resort to what I cannot but ask to be

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allowed to describe as the desperate expedient of some doctrine of a finite God.

There is, however, another connexion of thought in which one may be led to claim that Religion transcends Morality; and to this it is now time to turn.

It may be said that there are other kinds of goodness besides that which we ascribe to conduct, and that the source of Truth in Science or of Beauty in Art may acquire the character of Religion as well as the pursuit of what we call a moral ideal of personal and social behaviour. I will state very briefly what I would say about this matter.

The word *moral* has by its derivation a direct reference to *mores*, human ways and manners, and hence refers properly only to human or quasi-human conduct. To call anything other than this *morally* good or bad is therefore plainly an improper use of language.

Yet it is, I think, also plain that in calling (as we do) other things than human or quasi-human conduct *good* we are not using the word in a quite different sense from that in which we use when we are speaking of conduct. We call a pleasant experience or a beautiful thing of any sort or, again, a convincing

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argument *good* as well as noble conduct; but *morally* good we should not call any of them. I do not think, however, that by calling these *good*, we mean no more than that they are respectively pleasant, beautiful, or convincing; nor again, merely that they satisfy our desires—for we often just desire them because they are good, and we may sometimes recognize that they are good, and think that therefore we ought to desire them, though we do not.

We cannot indeed define what we mean by *good* in other terms but we always, I take it, mean by it something which, for obvious reasons, we commonly recognize most readily in what among “good” things is nearest to us, namely human conduct.

When, however, we ascribe as we do, goodness to human activity directed to the production of what is *good*, although not *morally* good, I think that the goodness of such an activity has a perfect right to the name of *moral goodness*. The scientific man’s conduct or the artist’s conduct is surely *morally good* when they are respectively engaged in the pursuit of truth or the creation of beauty. If the good artist be immoral, in the popular sense of the word which uses “morality” and “immorality” with special reference to those duties which are common to all

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men, we do not condone this immorality by recognizing the goodness, nay the moral goodness, shown by the same man in his faithful service of Beauty; any more than in calling the narrow-minded man who lives a life of self-control and spends himself in the service of the community, a *good* man, we need be supposed to be condoning the narrow-mindedness which may have led him to be uncharitable toward the artist or to persecute the heresies of the man of science. If we used "Morality" in a restricted sense to characterize one large and important sphere of conduct, we must not use it at the same time to include *all* good conduct; but it is better to call all good *conduct morally* good. And we may incidentally observe that it is often not those who are most admirable in those relations of life to which the word "morality" is most often applied—those whom we should be inclined to call "saintly"—who are most likely to be censorious, for example, of the artist who fails there while succeeding elsewhere. The self-complacent person who is ready to say, "Stand afar off, I am holier than thou," is not a saint. The saint knows his own shortcomings and his own warfare too well, and can appreciate the like struggle, failure and attainment in another.

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But while we may thus claim for Morality conduct directed to ends other than that discipline of one's own character and benevolence to one's neighbours which the word "moral" primarily suggests, it is indubitable that it is these ends rather than the pursuit of Truth or Beauty that it does primarily suggest. And, in the individual's ordering of his own life it may often happen that the pursuit of these ends to the uttermost may not be compatible with duties which are at once more universally obligatory and more directly due to certain definite individuals than the duty of scientific research or of artistic creation. And here it is that we shall find that only from the point of view of Religion can we so regard the controversy between Morality on the one hand and Art or Science on the other as to do justice to both parties.

We must indeed be careful, if we say (as I think we are entitled to say) that the elimination of Religion as a genuine form of experience would really involve the main task of Art and of Morality, to avoid misunderstandings which may easily arise. We must not allow ourselves to be supposed to mean that we cannot appreciate Beauty without holding some doctrine of a supernatural Artist or own the call of Duty without acknowledging a supernatural

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Law-giver. For this certainly would not be true. To recognise and delight in Beauty, to acknowledge what Kant called the Categorical Imperation of Duty, we assuredly need no deduction from theological premises. The splendour of the one (as Plato said), the authority of the other (as Butler said) is manifest, and neither needs or admits an external guarantee. But it is in Religion, as the experience in which the human soul is aware of itself as one with the heart of Reality (or at least as capable of becoming one with it), that the manifest authority of Duty, the manifest splendour of Beauty are no merely subjective or superficial appearances, but intimations of the nature of that ultimate Reality whose essential attributes are manifested therein.

Not only does Religion thus assure us that both in Art and in Morality do we lay hold of Reality, but also, by its interpretation of both as witnesses to different attributes of one Reality, it secures each from the dangers which threaten it from a complete separation from the other. The selfishness and cruelty which sometimes attend upon a one-sided aestheticism lose their inspiration when those elements of value in the world to which the source of Beauty satisfies are held to be secure in God although

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certain modes of aesthetic expression are found to be incompatible with Duty. And the censoriousness of a one-sided moralism, such as is symbolized by the *Urizen* of Blake's Prophetic Books, which is perpetually imposing limits upon artistic expression,—limits which often seem to the artist, with his passionate sense of Beauty, to be the fetters of an intolerable slavery,—is corrected by the faith which, even while denying the legitimacy of certain modes of artistic expression, affirms that what they would fain express is, so far as it is beautiful, also divine, and, even although it remain here and thus unexpressed, yet eternally secure in God.⁴

What has been said of Beauty may, I think, be said also *mutatis mutandis* of Truth. In practice the problem of incompatibility with Duty is more frequently and poignantly felt in the presence of the former; but towards the interests both of Science and of Art Morality may find itself in a position of antagonism which only under the inspiration of Religion can it, without betrayal of its own trust, overcome.

But not only does Morality thus need the inspiration of Religion to reconcile itself with Art and with

⁴ Cp. *Group Theories of Religion and the Individual*, p. 186 f.

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Science. It leads us itself directly to religion.

Our attitude of reverence to the Moral Law is after all an attitude which, when reflecting upon at a stage of spiritual development marked by a mature consciousness of personality we can scarcely describe satisfactorily except in terms which imply that it is in fact an attitude towards a Personal Law Giver. But the very moment that we attempt to distinguish in the will of this Personal Law Giver the object which he wills from the will itself which is directed towards that object, so that we could conceive of him as willing what we should not regard as obligatory, his will ceases to be identical with the authority in the consciousness of which our moral experience consists. Thus the conception of a Being who is not merely good but himself *the Good* is urged upon the student of ethics in the course of reflection upon the facts of the moral experience itself. These facts favour, as I have elsewhere contended,⁵ the assertion that in our consciousness of obligation we are aware of an imponent of the obligation, whom we must reverence as other than ourselves and as not merely superior to us but supreme over us, even though, in virtue of the unconditional acceptance of the obliga-

⁵ *Divine Personality and Human Life*, p. 132.

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tion by our reason, we may with Kant speak of that which he imposes as imposed by ourselves. We must acknowledge therefore in obligation not only, as Kant insisted, an aspect of autonomy, of self-imposed law, but also of a *heteronomy*, of a law imposed by another, which turns out on inspection to be really a *theonomy*, a law imposed by God. Such a heteronomy, however, is not a heteronomy in Kant's sense, in which he felt that it was inconsistent with the genuine notion of moral obligation or duty; for a law given by God is not a law given by one who is another, since it is involved in our notion of God that he is immanent in our reason and will, which notwithstanding he transcends.

We have thus come to the end of our task. We have distinguished Morality and Religion as different forms of spiritual experience or activity, although forms which are in constant mutual inter-action throughout the history of mankind. We have seen Morality as the critic of Religion, elevating it and purifying it; and we have finally seen Religion as the inspirer of Morality, delivering it from the dangers which beset it—from meticulous anxiety, from complacent pride, from pedantic rigour, and, at last, when itself purified by the criticism of Morality from

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superstition and arbitrariness, revealing the true nature of Morality, considered as, to quote the words of Martineau, "in the act of Conscience, immediately introducing us to a Higher than ourselves that gives us what we feel"; as therefore in fact itself, in a most genuine sense, an experience of the Presence of God.

III

THEOLOGY AS THE SCIENCE OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE¹

1

THEOLOGY is a very old name and Religious Experience is a very new one. Theology means an account of God or of the gods, and as long ago as the fourth century before our era Aristotle called by this name what we should call Metaphysics, his doctrine, that is to say, of the fundamental nature of Being or Reality. For this doctrine culminated in an account of that which is highest in the scale of being, and this is what we are accustomed to call God; for by God we always mean, as St. Anselm long after insisted, "that than which no greater can be conceived." Fourteen hundred years after the time of Aristotle, in the twelfth century after Christ, lived one to whom the intellectual life of Europe owes as heavy a debt as to any

¹ Originally delivered as a Lecture at the Oxford University Extension Summer Meeting, 1921.

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but a very few men in its history. This was Peter Abelard. It was from Abelard's teaching of a band of eager students on the hill of Ste. Geneviève in Paris (which has ever since been the Quartier Latin or learned district of the French Capital) that the greatest University of the middle ages, the parent, in all probability, of our own University of Oxford, took its origin. Now it was Abelard, a great innovator in many things, that first introduced the use of the word Theology, which is now so familiar to us, for a regular discussion of what was taught concerning the divine nature by Scripture and its ancient interpreters, as well as by those who, outside of the Chosen People and of the Christian Church, had come independently to the knowledge of the matters which were revealed in Scripture. Like others of Abelard's innovations, this employment of a term then unfamiliar in the field of sacred learning excited the suspicion and severe censure of his celebrated contemporary, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux. St. Bernard was a man of great sanctity and of real religious genius; but with these high qualities he combined the less attractive characteristics (with which sanctity and genuine religion are unfortunately not always incompatible) of a keen scent for heresy

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and zeal which outran knowledge in following up the scent. But again, like other innovations of Abelard's, this innovation also established itself despite St. Bernard's opposition. The Universities of Europe followed the true founder of the University of Paris in calling by this name of Theology, which he had brought into vogue, the subject which occupied their highest Faculty. They were long accustomed to use as the chief authority thereon, after the Bible, the collection of Sentences or opinions of the Fathers made by one of Abelard's most distinguished disciples, Peter the Lombard, who became Bishop of Paris, and was known from this collection of his by the title of "Master of the Sentences."

Theology is thus, as I have said, a very old name; but the other expression which in the note of this lecture I have brought into connexion with it is as I also said, a very new one. Indeed in the great Oxford English Dictionary, which gives an excellent summary of the history of the word Theology, you will find that the phrase "Religious Experience" in the sense in which it is now commonly used, and in which I am using it in this Lecture, is not mentioned or explained at all. It is probable that it owes, not indeed its origin, but its present vogue among us, to

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the well-known Gifford Lectures of the late Professor William James on *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. This book did much to familiarize us in this country with the notion of studying the records of men's religious feelings and actions, not in order to approve or to condemn, not in order to encourage or to discourage, but solely in order to know the facts, and, if possible, to discover the conditions under which those feelings are aroused and those actions done, and so to arrive at the causes in our nature and in our environment to which they may be referred; or, in other words, of studying these things with a scientific, not with an apologetic or polemical purpose.

At an earlier date the expression "Religious Experience" would have suggested—perhaps to some it still suggests—only such feelings and emotions as some Christian communities have deliberately taught their members to watch for in themselves and to describe for the encouragement of their brethren. And it must be admitted that James's book gave a disproportionate place to these. This was excusable, since it is precisely men and women belonging to such Christian communities as those of which I have just spoken that are, naturally enough, most ready to give an account of their religious feelings;

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while those bred up in other traditions would prefer to lay them up within their own hearts, and shrink from what they might think the irreverence of barring them to the gaze of an investigator who should put questions about them in the interest of the scientific study of religious phenomena. But while in the sphere of Religion, the word Experience has thus been commonly associated with feelings, regarded and valued as such, it has elsewhere been used rather to suggest the contact of the mind with an independent object than its preoccupation with its own inner states. Especially in philosophical literature the derivation of knowledge from Experience has commonly been understood to mean its derivation from the perception of external objects by the senses. Now it is well known that, when philosophers or psychologists come to reflect upon our perception of the external world, they find difficulties in determining to what extent the form under which objects are perceived by our senses is independent of the processes by means of which they are perceived. But we do not ordinarily doubt that the objects which we perceive are themselves real, independently of the processes which take place in us when we perceive them. To deny this would generally be taken at

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first sight to be equivalent to denying that they are real at all, and consequently to asserting that we have to do not with the genuine perception of an object but with an hallucination or illusion. And I think that, as a rule, those who nowadays speak of Religious Experience do intend to imply that in Religion we are not the victims of hallucination or illusion; but are aware of an independent Reality, which is made known to us in and through the actions and emotions of worship, prayer, meditation, and so forth, no less truly than the material things around us become known to us through our sensations and through the organic motions which those sensations initiate. But when it is suggested that Religious Experience, rather than some authoritative sacred book or tradition, should be taken as the starting point of Theology, it is no doubt meant that the theologian should begin by discovering, by introspection and from the accounts of others, the actual characteristics of the state of mind or consciousness which we call Religion or which attends the behaviour which we designate by that name. We need not in doing this assume that it is a state of mind or consciousness which can be understood or described as, so to say, something merely internal or subjec-

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tive, giving us no information about what lies beyond the individual mind that we are considering. For we must remind ourselves that it is the very nature of a *mind* to be aware of an object; of something, that is, distinct from and independent of the mental act whereby or wherein we are aware of it. And so whenever we think that there is no such independent object in existence as that of which someone professes to be aware, we say that such an one is *out of his mind*.

Now there is a certain kind of Experience which we may call the Experience of Beauty, or, if we prefer, Aesthetic Experience, from the comparison and contrast of which with the Religious Experience of which we are speaking we may, I think, learn something to our purpose. It is all the more worth our while for us to turn our attention this way, because there are not a few people who are inclined to think that Art, which is the cultivation of this Experience of Beauty, and which already takes for some the place in life formerly occupied by Religion, may end by replacing Religion altogether. Now it certainly seems to be the case that although the poet or the artist commonly regards himself as discovering Beauty in the world rather than as putting

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Beauty into the world, yet there does not appear to arise in the case of the perception of Beauty that insistent question about the reality of its object which so often vexes the religious man with respect to the existence of the God with whom he is accustomed to consider himself as in communion—a question moreover, the difficulty of answering which to their satisfaction often prevents men from surrendering themselves to Religion at all. It is true that it is not an easy matter to decide whether we ought to regard Beauty as being actually an objective quality, like their shape or their weight, belonging to the material things, star or mountain or flower, that we call beautiful; or whether we ought to follow Signor Benedetto Croce, the Italian philosopher, who is the most influential writer on this subject among our contemporaries, in holding that it is only because they express or stand for a certain kind of emotion excited in us on occasion of their presence to our senses that these things have a right to be called beautiful at all. But most of us would feel disposed to say that, however interesting this question may be to those of us who are philosophers, it makes no real difference to the experience of Beauty itself what answer we give to it. The moonlight on the

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sea, the lily of the field, the music of Bach, the poetry of Milton, the pictures of Titian—the beauty which we enjoy in seeing, hearing, reading these is quite indisputably and indubitably *there*, whatever we may hold, as philosophers, about the part played by our own minds in its creation, and, again, whether in the case of the works of art—the music, the poetry, the painting—what we call the *subjects*, which give their descriptive names to the pieces we admire, have any other kind of truth than that which is one with their beauty—that kind of truth of which Keats said, “Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty; that is all ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.” For example we need not, it may be said, believe in the historical truth of the Gospels or of the Book of Genesis or of the Greek mythology, in order to appreciate the beauty of the Passion Music or of the *Paradise Lost* or of the Bacchus and Ariadne in the National Gallery. No doubt this is, roughly speaking, true; although I do not myself think that we should find our satisfaction in the beauty either of Nature or of Art quite unimpaired if we were to keep steadily before our minds while contemplating it the thought that the beauty we were enjoying was *not* really in the things we called beautiful; or per-

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haps even if, in the case of music or pictures or poems, we dwelt upon the thought, while reading the poems, looking at the pictures, or listening to the music, that what they professed to represent was entirely fictitious.

Aesthetic Experience then—the Experience of Beauty—is, like all experience, experience of an object, which we distinguish from the act in which we experience it. Yet we seem, so far as we are artists or men of taste, to have little or no interest in the question what this object may be outside of or apart from the experience itself. Nor do we greatly care, so far as we are artists or men of taste, what relation the object may bear to other objects which we may have before us on other occasions. Such questions may interest us as philosophers or men of science, but not as artists or men of taste. But when we turn from Aesthetic Experience to Religious Experience, we shall find that the case is quite otherwise. It is, I think, an essential feature of Religious Experience that here we always, however vaguely and indefinitely, conceive ourselves to be concerned with the very heart and inmost reality of things. Consequently we can never, in respect of Religious Experience, be indifferent, as we may

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be plausibly said to be indifferent in respect of Aesthetic Experience, to the question what relation our Religious Experience and its Object may bear to other forms of experience which we enjoy and to the respective objects of those forms of experience. This is the outstanding difference between Religious and Aesthetic Experience. If we attempt to assimilate Religious to Aesthetic Experience in this respect, we shall be depriving Religious Experience of its most essential characteristic.

In the title which I gave to this lecture, I used beside the word "Theology" and the word "Religious Experience" another word, the word "Science." I undertook to discuss "Theology as the Science of Religious Experience." In what sense, I would now ask, can Theology be rightly spoken of as a "Science"? We often nowadays use the word "Science" as short for Natural Science. This is a more recent use of the word than is always realised. It does not indeed date back beyond the middle of the nineteenth century; but it has by to-day established itself in common parlance. Now, if Theology is to be called a Science, it cannot be, it is clear, in precisely this sense. For between Natural Science and Theology there are some marked

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differences. Thus Natural Science rightly and necessarily abstracts from—that is to say, it leaves out of account—the individual observer of the natural phenomena with which it is concerned. It takes note of what it calls the “personal equation” only to discount it. But in dealing with Religious Experience the individual personality of the religious man cannot be thus discounted; and so when we call Theology the Science of Religious Experience, we can only mean that it is an orderly or systematic account of Religious Experience, ranging its phenomena under general rules and indicating principles for the conduct of further enquiry respecting them.

But, even though we bear in mind that Theology must differ from Natural Science in some important respects, and especially in that of abstracting from or leaving out of account, as Natural Science does, the personality of the man or woman who enjoys the experience of which it endeavours to give an account, we may yet be inclined to ask ourselves whether it is not misleading to call Theology by the name of Science at all. For we find Theology always employing conceptions which are rather symbols and figures of a Reality transcending our under-

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standing than generalizations from experience gained by the use of the senses, such as those with which Natural Science works. And we may be disposed to think that, since Theology professes to deal with what lies beyond and behind all phenomena, it must always employ such conceptions. The use of such figures and symbols may then seem at once to remove Theology from the class of thought which the word Science very naturally suggests to us into another which is too unlike it to be conveniently designated by the same term.

Now I do not wish by any means to minimize the difference which undoubtedly exists between Theology and Natural Science in this respect; and yet it may be contended that it is a difference of degree rather than of kind. For Natural Science has made and still continues to make use, and profitable use, of conceptions which are rather justified by their practical convenience than verified by actual direct experience by means of the senses. I am thinking of such conceptions as those of ether, of atoms, and the like. I am by no means competent to understand, far less to criticize, the theories of Relativity associated with the name of Einstein, of which we have lately heard so much; and so I do not propose to

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say anything about them here. But it is plain that, whatever be the eventual fate of these theories, the acceptance of them must involve the relegation of some statements often treated in the past as unquestionably true accounts of the real world to the rank of more or less convenient fictions. The figurative or symbolical element then which is obviously present in Theology is not completely absent in Sciences to which no one would think of refusing that name. The difference between them and Theology would thus seem to be, as I said before, one rather of degree than of kind.

But there are other differences beside that which we have just been considering which divide the Religious Experience of which Theology attempts to give a systematic account from the Experience of which such an account is given by the Natural Sciences. These differences place Religious Experience apart from this particular kind of Experience, but alongside of some other kinds to the reasoned accounts of which the name of Science is often given. I mean the Aesthetic and the Political kinds of Experience. For these are at once individual and social in a way in which the kind of Experience described in Natural Science is not.

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No doubt everything with which the biologist or chemist or physicist is concerned exists and only exists in individual instances; there is no growth in general which is not the growth of some particular organism; no oxygen in general apart from some particular particles of oxygen; no mass or motion apart from some particular moving body. But what the biologist or chemist or physicist is concerned with is always the features common to many individual things, in abstraction from their individuality. No doubt again scientific enquiry itself only exists in societies, and in societies which have attained to a high degree of development; and the language or the symbolism (the mathematical formulas, for instance) in which its results are communicated is a social product and rests upon a social convention. Yet the scientific observer or experimenter always seeks, so far as possible to sink his nationality, his creed, his class, his profession, and so on, and to allow them to exercise no influence whatever on his observations and experiments. On the other hand the critic of Art or the student of Politics has always before him an individual work of art or an individual community, which he endeavours to understand or comprehend. No doubt he does this

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to a great extent by means of comparing or contrasting it with others in respect of features which it has in common with those others. But still it is as an individual, even as a unique individual, that he studies it. And, moreover, in order to achieve his comprehension or understanding of it, he must bring to bear a sympathy and insight which he has as belonging to his own people, and as sharing, even consciously sharing, in their common experience and history. And, just in the same way, Religion also exists always in the form of some particular religion. It is always mediated through a social life, a life belonging to a community of some kind or other.

It is of the very essence of Religion that it involves a consciousness of ourselves in relation to that which is at the heart or (if we prefer that metaphor) at the back of everything. And for this very reason it is only with the whole personality, without abstracting from what belongs to us as members of a nation or a church or other social organism, that we can enjoy the experience which we call Religion. This I venture to assert, although I am quite well aware that there are features and forms of the Religious Experience which might seem flatly to contradict my statement. There is the mystic's flight "of the Alone to

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the Alone," to use the famous and often quoted expression of the great philosophical mystic Plotinus. There is the leaving of father and mother, of wife and children and lands, which the Founder of our religion required of his followers. There is the mendicancy of the Buddhist monk or the Christian friar. I cannot now enter upon any full consideration of the problem which this seeming contradiction between these features and forms of religion and its essentially social character, as belonging to the whole personality with all its social relations, may well raise in your minds. I can only say that I believe the contradiction to be no more than a seeming one, and invite you to consider the question for yourselves. There is nothing which should throw more light upon Religion than such a consideration. But it is worth noticing that this seeming contradiction is only one of a number of antitheses or antinomies which characterize Religion. Thus we have Religion appearing on the one hand as something profoundly *inward*. In Religion, more than in any other form of spiritual experience the soul seeks to withdraw itself from everything external and adventitious and to present itself naked before God. Yet on the other hand nothing is more evidently characteristic of Religion

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throughout its recorded history than its *sociality*, if I may use the word. Again Religion is at once the most *conservative* and also the most *revolutionary* of social forces. It is at once the root of Philosophy, that is to say of the insatiable search for ultimate truth which cannot content itself with any unproved assertion or uncriticized dogma, and also the daily bread of the spiritual life, in their need of which the wise and the simple are as one. By sheer presenting to us so many antitheses or antinomies, such as I have tried to illustrate by the mention of two or three of the most obvious, Religion is marked out as being the richest or most concrete form of human experience. For here the polar opposites, whose mutual repulsion and inseparable union constitute the spiritual life, are revealed in their extreme forms, and accept of reconciliation only through the fullest working out of their several possibilities. If Theology is to be truly the Science of Religious Experience this paradoxical union of opposites, which is characteristic of Religious Experience, must find in it due expression, and must serve to distinguish it from sciences which make it their business to set out the nature of forms of experience more departmental and

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abstract or finite than that particular form of experience to which we give the name of Religion.

Now the view which I am here taking of Theology as the endeavour to give a systematic and reasoned account of Religious Experience is in disagreement with any view which regards it as essentially concerned with the deductions which may be drawn from certain authoritative statements made by inspired persons or contained in inspired writings. Such a view of it has, however, often been taken and is still sometimes taken. Much theology which I should regard as being of high value as an account of Religious Experience has been actually worked out by men who conceived themselves to be merely ascertaining and setting in order what they took to be implied in the words of such authoritative texts or statements. The space now at my disposal is not sufficient for more than a brief outline of the position which I should myself take up in reference to this matter.

We shall find that in the history of the Natural Sciences there was a stage in which men were accustomed to appeal to authoritative texts in a way in which theologians have more constantly done. And we should, I believe, be mistaken if we were to sup-

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pose that this kind of appeal was without any justification, or that genuine scientific enquiry was merely hindered by it.

Where, as was the case in the middle ages, the authoritative writers to whom appeal was made really possessed a wider and fuller knowledge of relevant facts, a surer grasp of the problems at issue, and a more cultivated outlook than was easily or at all attainable by those who made the appeal, there the appeal was justified. It only became a serious hindrance to scientific progress when a dictum of Aristotle or some other ancient author came to be treated as beyond criticism, to be accepted in the face of fresh observations or experiments, and not brought to the test which these might afford. It is in any science an error to treat tradition as irreformable and beyond criticism; but it is not an error to regard it with respect in the first instance, as standing for an experience longer than the individual critic's, to be examined and, if possible, its origin accounted for, before it is utterly rejected.

But in the sphere of Theology tradition may rightly be allowed to play a part larger than can be reasonably assigned to it in Natural Science. This is so for two reasons, not unconnected with each other.

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The *first* is the social character of the Religious Experience, to which I have already referred. Normally at least, Religion is mediated to the individual through a religious society or community; in the earlier stages of civilization through a tribe or a nation, in the later through a church. This mediation does not consist solely in the handing on by instruction to the individual of knowledge already attained; this, of course, occurs in the sphere of Natural Science as well. But the Religious Experience is normally, at any rate, an experience gained in and through fellowship with the religious society of which the individual is a member. Thus the assimilation of the social tradition of such a community is an integral part of the individual's religious experience.

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I now come to the *second* reason which may be given for the importance assigned to tradition in the sphere of Theology. We have to observe that the religious experience of a religious society is itself usually originated by the activity of some person of exceptional genius and initiation, whom we may call a Prophet, and who stands to the majority of his followers or disciples in a relation similar to

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that in which those whom we call original poets or artists stand to the majority of persons of taste, whose artistic life consists in the main in the appreciation and study of the works which the genius of these others has created. It is to this characteristic of the religious life that is due the prominent position held in the history of Theology by the notion of *Revelation*. The word *Revelation* is indeed a natural one enough for the process by which we obtain a knowledge of the divine nature. For while in our knowledge of *things* we seem to stand on a higher level than the objects which we discover around us; and in our knowledge of *persons* to stand as it were on a level with those with whom we are, as we say, *acquainted*: in our knowledge of *God* we can only regard ourselves as the recipients of a *revelation* which he makes to us. But the frequent use of this word *Revelation* in Theology is due not so much to its special appropriateness to describe the process by which a knowledge of God comes to us, as to the important place held in the history of Religion by those whom I have called Prophets. For they are the primary recipients of the Religious Experience, which their followers are only empowered to appro-

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priate and share by standing in the relation of discipleship to them.

But in my judgment it is a false notion of Revelation that is held when it is contrasted with Reason or Conscience as a wholly different source of information concerning divine things. Those who entertain this notion sometimes suppose the place which in other branches of knowledge is occupied by self-evident principles, logical or moral, to be taken in Theology by pronouncements received upon authority and exempt from criticism, to be taken or left, but not, if once taken, to be called again in question. No less a philosopher than Bacon seems to have adopted this view of Theology; but, in adopting it, he has illustrated it by a comparison which may well give pause to anyone disposed to follow him in this opinion. For he compares it to a game, with rules according to which we must play it, if we play it at all, without questioning them, just because they are the rules. Theology, however, will not long remain in honour, if its principles be thus regarded. Indeed, Bacon himself, though not, as I conceive, intending of set purpose to bring into contempt the science which he elsewhere finely describes as "the port and sabbath-rest of all our contemplations," was less con-

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cerned, it must be admitted, to insist upon its own dignity than to warn it off from intrusion into the sphere legitimately reserved for Natural Science. For it was Natural Science of whose interests he had constituted himself the champion, and whose splendid destiny he made it his chief business to announce in the resounding eloquence of which he was so great a master. It has not, however, been only those whose minds, like Bacon's, were preoccupied with other studies that have represented Theology as resting upon merely positive and arbitrary principles under the name of dogmas. Not a few of those who have themselves been eminent theologians have been willing to give a like account of their own special science. This conception, which assimilates Theology to such a purely conventional "science" (if the word be here permitted) as Heraldry admittedly is, and as Judicial Astrology would now by most people be held to be, is quite a different one from that adopted in the present Lecture.

It will perhaps be well to suggest by taking some familiar theological doctrines as illustrations of the way in which the conception of Theology as the Science of Religious Experience which has been adopted in this Lecture might be carried out in

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detail. I should for example say that, when in Theology Personality is ascribed to God, we are expressing the experience of a personal relation to God in a way in which we can think about it and consider what it may involve or presuppose. Again, when Fatherhood is ascribed to God, we are expressing an experience in which this personal relation is found to have a more definite character, one comparable to that which a child bears to its parent. Now this conception of sonship to God is common to the Christian religion with the Stoic philosophy (which may very well be called a religion, too), but the Christian's attitude towards his Father in heaven is distinguished by a humility which contrasts very sharply with the sentiment embodied in the Stoic saying that Zeus has no advantage over the Wise Man except that he is immortal. It is in the Christian's consciousness that he is a son of God not in his own right but by the free grace of Another who is the Son of God in His own right that this humility is grounded; and it is this experience of what I may call a mediate sonship to God which is expressed in theological terms by the doctrine of Christ's unique Sonship and mediatorial office. In the formulas devised for the settlement of the controversy which distracted the

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Christian Church of the fourth century about the exact relation of Christ to God the Father we may see the result of the attempt to find an account of the matter which should do justice to the Christian's experience of communion. For this has been usually an experience of communion not with any transient manifestation of God, nor with a subordinate being who, however exalted, could be regarded as utterly dependent no less than we ourselves are on the good pleasure of the Supreme Power which had made and could in turn unmake it; but on the ultimate Godhead itself, to whose eternal nature the relation of sonship in which in virtue of his union with Christ the Christian knew himself to stand to the Father must therefore be conceived intrinsically and necessarily to belong. Again, behind the eucharistic controversies of a later time there lie experiences of spiritual communion in and through the sacramental rite which demanded an adequate expression in theological terms. So too, experiences of individual initiative and of individual helplessness in the moral life lie behind those other controversies which are concerned with the problems of predestination and freewill; problems in which, as you will remember, the fallen angels in Milton.

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Found no end in wandering mazes lost.

So far as theological discussions are really dealing with genuine religious experiences they have real importance; and they may often be really dealing with such, even when unfamiliarity with the traditional vocabulary employed may disguise the fact from an impatient critic. Yet no doubt it is to be recognized that questions have often been raised and discussed by theologians, which, religious experience having been left behind and the disputants having allowed themselves to be entangled in a mere dialectical manipulation of formulas, we may reasonably suspect of being unprofitable, just because they are in truth unmeaning. Among such unprofitable enquiries may perhaps be reckoned questions about the fate of sacramental elements altogether apart from and outside of the experience of sacramental communion; or again, about the sequence of the divine decrees establishing the necessary order of the universe and the supposed historical event of Adam's fall; or once more, about the inspiration of words which happen to occur in the same book or collection of books, other parts of which have served as vehicles of spiritual illumination to a religious society. On the other hand, theological speculations which in one

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way or another forsake traditional lines and employ a phraseology lacking traditional sanction, such as those, to take modern examples, of the poet Blake or, in our own day, of Mr. H. G. Wells, may be deserving of serious consideration, as sincere attempts to give a reasoned expression to religious experiences which the traditional formulas seemed to their authors to fail in describing or even to contradict. These speculations may point to real deficiencies in the traditional theology which, if it is to do its business, it must somehow make good. Such a service has often been rendered to Theology in the past by what are traditionally called heresies. We find something analogous to this in the history of physical science, where doctrines (for instance those of the earth's motion or of the atomic constitution of matter) have been suggested without sufficient evidence being alleged in their support or in unacceptable contexts, and have been therefore neglected by those who carried on the main tradition of the sciences which were eventually to resort to them as expressing better than any others the actual experience of mankind.

Nothing in the past history of Theology is more repugnant to modern sentiment than the intolerance and even persecution with which variation from the

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dominant theories has so often been visited by their upholders. I will conclude what I have to say by some observations, suggested by my remark about "heresies," which may help us to understand both how this could have justified itself to the consciences of sincerely good men, and how we can now condemn it without denying the importance of issues which were once so tragically debated.

It was a true instinct which led the Christian Church on the whole to refuse to acquiesce in the view associated with what is called Gnosticism. Gnosticism was a way of thinking which underlay the earliest group of heresies by which the peace of the Church was disturbed. It was the view of Gnosticism that the simple believer on the ground of his defect in knowledge or in intellectual gifts is to be regarded as unable to pass, as it were, beyond the outer court of the temple, and that access to the presence chamber of God is a privilege reserved for those in possession of an esoteric wisdom which enables them to look down upon the common faith of the whole Christian society as something which they have transcended and with which they can dispense. Such an aristocratic conception was justly esteemed by the main body of the Christian Church to be inconsistent

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with that preaching of the Gospel to the poor which Jesus himself is related to have indicated as the salient feature of his mission, and inconsistent also with the fundamental Christian conviction that in Christ the Supreme God and Father of all had once for all reconciled the world unto himself and granted access to himself through one Spirit to all believers. In this denial that infirmity in speculative insight or in recondite knowledge carried with it spiritual superiority, or brought its possessor of necessity into more intimate relations with God than were open to the humblest Christian, we may well acquiesce. But this denial has seemed to many, by what I think was a mistake, to involve the conclusion that assent to whatever formula was held to be a satisfactory account in the language of philosophy of the religious experience which was supposed to be common to all members of the Church might be, nay must be, demanded from all who were or would be members, as a test of their true Christianity. Neither inability to understand the Church's creed on the one side nor the claim to be wiser than the Church on the other could be allowed to dispense any one from accepting the creed; for the unity of the whole fellowship and the equal standing of all its members in Christ might

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be endangered by such a dispensation. Those who could not understand the creed were bound, it was thought, by loyalty to the community to endorse what was guaranteed by lawful authority as containing no more than the old traditional faith, even if expressed in unfamiliar terms; while hesitation to accept it on the part of the learned was suspected to imply an intention to desert that same traditional faith and to rob the simpler brethren of their security that what they were required to profess was no more than what they already believed.

But, however intelligible and however deserving of respect this anxiety to keep the intellectually rich and the intellectually poor united in the confession of one Saviour, it was condemned by its fruits; for these fruits were unquestionably the tyrannical enslavement of the understanding on the one hand, which was made to feel itself not free to make adventures; and on the other hand the encouragement, among the uneducated and those not gifted with intellectual ability, of a trust in formulas which conveyed no distinct meaning to their minds and could only have for them the significance of magical charms, or of shibboleths by which to test the party connexion

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of those who would consent or decline to utter them, as the case might be.

It is a more excellent way that theological speculation should have free play, unhampered by any suspicion of disloyalty, while on the other hand those who have no bent towards such speculation should be content, without sitting in judgment on those who are called to engage in it, to be faithful to their own religious experience, and to use for its expression and as a means toward its further development the guidance of the tradition which embodies the main experience of the community. This is what men do in other departments of life. But, here as elsewhere, a greater freedom than our forefathers enjoyed brings with it a greater responsibility. Theologians are all the more bound to practice self-criticism and to avoid wilfulness and fantastic exaggeration in their speculations, and religious men who are not theologians all the more bound to cultivate loyalty and sincerity, now that all alike, those who are and those who are not theologians, are left to themselves, without the support or the opposition of an intolerant public opinion, to stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made them free.

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A century of Anglican

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